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THE

LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

NATHANIEL PEARCE,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,

DURING

A RESIDENCE IN ABYSSINIA,

FROM THE YEARS 1810 TO 1819.

TOGETHER WITH

MR. COFFIN'S ACCOUNT OF HIS VISIT TO GONDAR.

EDITED BY

J. J. HALLS, ESQ.

84494

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,

NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1831.

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LONDON :

P. SHOBERL, JUN., LONG ACRE.

TO THE

EARL OF MOUNTNORRIS, F.R.S.,

ETC. ETC. ETC.

MY DEAR LORD,

I willingly avail myself of your kind permission to dedicate the following pages to your Lordship. To whom, indeed, could I with so much propriety address them, as to the noble individual who has, during a period of nearly thirty years, been pleased to honour me with the most unequivocal marks of his friendship and esteem, and to whose kindness and liberality I am indebted for the copyright of the work?

It was under the immediate auspices of your lordship, that my late lamented friend, Mr. Salt, undertook his first journey to Abyssinia; an event, which accidentally led to your lordship's first acquaintance with the author of this Journal—one of those remarkable and adventurous beings, whom Nature, in her sportive humour, seems to take delight in creating.

He was found by your lordship in the most forlorn and deplorable condition, and it was through your benevolence, seconded by the efforts of Mr. Salt, that the outcast became reclaimed, and once more obtained a

reputable footing in society. His gratitude for the favours he received terminated only with his life, and I am sure it must prove a source of lasting satisfaction to your lordship, that you were made the immediate instrument of rescuing a fellow-creature from that destruction, which early misconduct had nearly rendered inevitable.

With respect to the Journal itself, it possesses no claims to literary distinction. It is the artless and unvarnished narrative of an uncultivated, but strong and original mind, and, in preparing it for the public, it has been my chief endeavour to retain, as much as possible, the sense and language of the original, and to confine my alterations merely to such corrections in orthography, grammar, &c., as would tend to render it more clear and intelligible to the reader. It is, however, greatly to be regretted, that the various private and public avocations of Mr. Salt, and his untimely death, prevented him from fulfilling his intention of superintending the publication of the manuscript.

With every kind wish for your lordship's prosperity, health, and happiness, I remain, my dear lord,

Your Lordship's

faithful Friend and Servant,

J. J. HALLS.

Harrow, June, 1831.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

Life of Nathaniel Pearce, written by himself, and addressed to Henry Salt, Esq. 1

CHAPTER I.

Ras Welled Selassé—Submission of Guebra Guro, and his brothers, Subegadis, Sardie, and Agoos, to the Ras—They again rebel—Unite with the Gusmati Ischias, Ras Michael's grandson, and other chiefs, to take the province of Tigré—Are driven by the Ras's troops across the river Tacazzé—Visit of Ras Ilo; his reception at Chelicut—Ras Welled Selassé takes the field against the Rebels—Mountain of Ambaarra, a stronghold of Subegadis—He is dislodged from it—Preparations for War with Guxo—The Gusmarsh Salada—Defeat of Guxo's army—Gojee—His barbarity—Guebra Guro again makes his submission—Forged Letter respecting Pearce and Coffin—Reports concerning a white Traveller—Displeasure of the Ras with Pearce, and reconciliation—Present to the Ras from the King of Shoa—Battle between Baharnegash Subhart and Shum Woldi—Death of Nebrid and Funeral Ceremonies—Tusfu Mariam, one of the Ras's Chiefs, surprised by Subegadis and slain—Operations of Guxo—Guebra Guro confined—Submission of the Gusmati Ischias and other

rebel Chiefs—Ravages of the Small-pox—Superstitions of the Abyssinians in regard to Diseases 55

CHAPTER II.

Destruction of the town of Bolento by the Galla—Government and manners of the Galla—Mr. Coffin's departure for Mocha—Present from the King of Shoa to the Ras—The Small-pox—Death of Ito Yasous, the King's brother, and his sister, Ozoro Mantwaub, wife of the Ras—Affliction of the Ras—Funeral of the Ozoro — Movements of Guxo — The Ras takes to wife a daughter of the King Itsa Tecla Gorgis—Battle between two chiefs at Antàlo—Submission of Subegadis to the Ras—Plans of Ras Guebra and Guxo—Locusts—Famine—Itsa Bede Mariam, formerly king, visits Antàlo—Insecurity of property—Reigning kings of Abyssinia—The Ras assembles his army—Defeat of Hilier Mariam by the Tigré army—Presents to messengers of good tidings—Insurrection of Subegadis—Release of Guebra Guro 93

CHAPTER III.

The Ras marches against a Galla Chief—Surprise and Defeat of the Galla—Illness of Pearce—Justice of the Ras—Pearce becomes worse—Is visited secretly by the Ras—Pearce visits the Ras's brother, Ito Debbib—Stones with Arabic Inscriptions—Cry for the death of the kings Yoas and Yonas—Lama—Rough Races—Review—Pearce is obliged by his malady to return home—His wife Tringo—Administration of the Sacrament—His recovery—Murder of the king of Shoa—Sacred Spring—Grand Review—The Sacred Snake—Military Manœuvres—Narrow Escape of Pearce and Coffin 116

CHAPTER IV.

Death of the deposed king Itsa Ischias—Proceedings in a case of Murder—Execution—Escape of the Culprit—Law relative to Murder—March of the Army from Chelicut—Hikeer Mussal—

Dacer—Aspect of the Country—The Aggerzeen, a species of Deer—Return to Chelicut—King Tecla Gorgis entreats the Ras to march to Gondar—Entertainment of the Ras, when on march, by the Chiefs—Mr. Coffin stung by a Scorpion—Feast at Moi Agenzean—Entry of the Ras into Axum—Meeting of Tecla Gorgis and the Ras—Ozoro Dinkernagh—Ozoro Duster—The King-Snake—Meeting at the Church—The Crying Cross—Picture of the Virgin Mary 141

CHAPTER V.

Pearce is obliged by ill health to leave the Ras and return to Adowa—He is joined by his wife—Recovers, and sets out for Enderta—His reception by a Village Chief—Asgas Giggar—Pearce's party refused accommodation by a Farmer—Custom of Soldiers to quarter themselves on Farmers—Mountain of Avvaro—Arrival at Chelicut—Sudden death of two Servants, attributed to ghosts or devils—Illness and death of Pearce's son—Gifts—Funeral Ceremonies—Rapacity of the Priests—Death of Ito Debbib, the Ras's brother—Cry held for him—Mourning . 177

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Coffin's Journal of the Expedition to Gondar—Departure of the Army from Axum—The River Tacazzé—River Moi Lomin—Oranges—Cotton—Irrigation—Monkeys—Strong Mountain of Chirremferrer—The Troops annoyed by Stones rolled from the Mountain—They take it by Storm—Fodder for Cattle—Hay not known in Abyssinia—Dangerous mountain roads—The Worari, or Foragers—Gudgauds, or Pits for concealing Goods—Adventure of Pearce in a Gudgaud—Tree called Genvarar; superstitious notion respecting it—Encampments—The Ras enters Inchetkaub, the capital of Ras Guebra—Arder Rummet, the capital of Walkayt—Reception of Woldi Comfu—The Shangalla—Elephant-hunt—Story of a Monk—Strength of the Army—Sudden Death of Woldi Comfu—A Galla girl stolen from the Ras by his Nephew, Shum Temben Sarlu—The Ras deprives him of his

districts—Treaty with Ras Guxo and Ilo—Beautiful Valley of Shoader 198

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Coffin's Narrative concluded—Expedition to collect the Income of Wogara, &c.—Lofty Mountain of Limalms—The River Ungarrau—Arrival at Gondar—The king's house—Description of the town—Singing-Women—Wine—Fish—Mr. Coffin receives a Visit from an old Servant—Jews—Priests—Church of Quosquom — Building Materials — Painting — Return to Inchetkaub—Deputation of Priests sent by Guebra to intercede for him with the Ras—Intrigues of Guebra and Tecla Gorgis—Mountain of Sankar Bar—Attacked and taken by the Ras—Slaughter of the enemy—Devastations of the conquerors—Mountain of Amba Hai, Guebra's stronghold—The government of Samen given to Guebra Michael—The Gama—Interchange of presents between the Ras and Ras Guebra—Trial of an English cannon—Story of a Turk 231

CHAPTER VIII.

Pearce's Journal resumed — His Return to the Camp and Reception by the Ras—Cry held for the Ras's brother—Pearce's Grass taken by the king—Church of Chelicut—The Organ—Expedient for Scaring Grass-Stealers—Rage of the King—The Ras's Buffoon—Buffoons kept by the Chiefs, and their Duties —The King dines with the Ras—Person and Character of King Tecla Gorgis—His Treachery—His Departure for Axum—Hail-Storm—Devastations of Elephants 261

CHAPTER IX.

Character, Manners, and Customs, of the Abyssinians—Their Complexion—Precarious nature of the Matrimonial tie—Masters and Servants — Mechanics — Extraordinary Superstition respecting the Potters and workers in Iron—Supposed to have the Power of Transforming themselves into Hyænas — The

Zackary — Persons possessed with Evil Spirits — Cure for that Disorder — Case of Pearce's Wife — Diseases — Treatment in Small-pox — Four Species of Venereal Complaint — Medicines —Scrophula — The Tape-worm —Wild Honey — Lying-in Women — Ceremony of Christening — Whimsical Practice to preserve Children from dying — Marriage — Divorce — Law-suits— Wagers 282

CHAPTER X.

Arts practised to procure Husbands—Dowry—Ceremonies of Marriage — The *Arkeys;* their Duties — Musical Instruments— Dancing—Depravity of the Clergy—Licentiousness of the nobility and higher classes—Punctual observance of Fasts—Administration of the Holy Sacrament — Marks of Respect paid to Churches — Priests — Confessors — Schools — Punishment of Scholars —Written Charms — Story of a Gojam Dofter — Tobacco prohibited by the Priests — Their Dress — Form of Churches — The *Tavvat*, or Ark — Mode of obtaining Redress from Princes or Chiefs —Payment of Taxes — Cattle — Servants —Houses—Agriculture—Ravages of Monkeys — Crops —Weeding—Cookery—Feeding 314

LIFE OF NATHANIEL PEARCE,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,

AND ADDRESSED TO HENRY SALT, ESQ.

Adowa, July, 1817.

SIR,

ACCORDING to your desire, which I am very happy to obey, I send you every particular of my life that I can possibly recollect, previously to my becoming acquainted with you; scandalous as it is, the truth of it will shame the devil.

I was born at East Acton, Middlesex, on the 14th day of February, 1779, and before I was seven years of age I had learned to read and write a little, at a day-school in Acton. My father, seeing me more inclined to wildness than the book, sent me as far from him as possible, thinking it would be for my good, which was to the Rev. Daniel Adderson's academy, at Thirsk, in

Yorkshire, where I remained exactly six years, during which time my mind was constantly given to bird's-nesting, and to all manner of wild tricks, for which I was continually punished severely, till I got so hardened, that, at last, I did not mind a flogging for a pocketful of apples, or a jack-daw's nest; and, at the end of the six years, the only improvement I had made in my scholarship was, that I had got through the French Grammar, and, in summing, into vulgar fractions, which I can assure you was not the fault of my master or his ushers, whom I fairly tired out.

My poor old father, who loved me as he loved his life, expecting, when he sent for me home, to find me sufficiently learned to go into any kind of business, received me with tears running from his eyes, and, unable to express himself at the joy of seeing me, caught me round the neck in his arms, the same as if I had risen from the dead; hardened though I was, I also shed a flood of tears. The next day, several of my father's friends sent to him, begging that he would allow me to pay them a visit, to which he gave his consent. My sister took me to several of our family's acquaintances, all of whom expressed great joy at receiving me, and asked me several questions concerning how far I had got in my studies; one especially, a rank Methodist, asked me to read a

few chapters in the Testament. This request very much shamed me, and I at first refused, saying that I was not well; however, he clapped the book into my hand, and I began hammering and stammering, which so much surprised the holy gentleman, that he said, "The Lord be with you my child! you are a great dunce."

This unhappy discovery was soon reported to my father, who felt very much for my misfortune; though, from the tender affection he had for me, he never pretended to be angry when I was in his sight. He knew perfectly well the wildness of my mind, and always pretended to be well pleased, for fear I should take flight; he constantly gave me good advice, and sent me again to Dr. Hall's academy in East Acton, where I learned more in five or six months than I did the whole six years in Yorkshire. I soon, however, began my wild tricks again, and was continually playing truant; and, as the severest punishment had no effect upon me, my father at last determined, if possible, to break me in. He accordingly sent me apprentice to a stubborn and unmerciful carpenter and joiner, in Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, London, of the name of Thatcher.

Being unable to bear his sulky look and heavy fist, I soon found my way to Wapping, where, at

New Crane Stairs, I met with a waterman, to whom I told my mind. Glad of his prize, he put me into the stern-sheets of his boat, like a gentleman, and pulled me on board of a bark called the Commerce of London. The mate, seeing me well rigged, was very particular in inquiring into my character, &c. &c.; especially where I was born, and whose son I was. Having been taught by the waterman what answers to give, I perfectly satisfied the mate, the captain being on shore; seeing me a well-limbed, likely lad, he paid the waterman, and gave him some drink for his trouble. At sunset, the captain came on board, and the mate immediately presented me to him. He looked at me for some time, and asked, in his broad Yorkshire accent, where I came from. Being well acquainted with the Yorkshire dialect, I answered as he liked, and told him I was born at Sutton, near Thirsk, in Yorkshire. He asked me if I knew Beverley, where he said he was born. I told him I had heard of it, but had never been there. He asked me several other questions, to which I gave good answers, but when he asked me with whom I came to London, I was at a loss to find out a lie that would satisfy him; so, with my stammering, he began to be doubtful of what I had told him being truth. However, he said he would report me to the owner, and get me an

apprentice's indentures and clothing. The waterman, who pulled me on board, knowing all my secrets, soon, for the sake of a shilling or two, went to my sister, and told her what he had done with me, I having been fool enough to tell him that I had a sister living in the Minories. About three or four days afterwards, one of the apprentice-boys told me that my father was at the owner's house in Mile-End; the owner's name was Kiddy. My poor father did all he could to coax me back, but to no purpose, as I swore I would tie a shot to my neck and jump overboard sooner than go back. He at last found it all in vain; so he bought me sailor's clothing and every necessary, and left me with tears in his eyes.

I made one voyage to Petersburgh, and, on my return, went to see my sister, who kept me with her until she sent to my father, who soon came and took me home. As we rode home in a chaise-cart, the poor affectionate old man asked me if I had had enough of the sea, and gave me several good pieces of advice, and promised me that he would do many things if I would be dutiful. I remained nearly three weeks pretty quiet; but, beginning again my old faults, my friends advised my father once more to put me apprentice in London, which he again did, and sent me to a wholesale and retail leatherseller's, in Duke

Street, West Smithfield. My master, whose name was Martin, in a few weeks liked me very much, and entrusted me more than any one in his house; he scarcely ever required me to do any thing, but to go on messages to Lombard Street with bills of exchange, &c.; in doing which I always gave him great satisfaction, and never was wrong in bringing him any sum of money that I might have received from the bankers, or the houses of creditors. However this did not last long; my mistress, Mrs. Martin, and I, did not agree, so I packed up my kit of clothing when my master was absent, and set out for Deptford, where I found a boat's crew of young lads, like myself. We soon got acquainted;—they belonged to a new sloop of war, called the Alert, then just fitting out; one of them fetched me a dress of his own from the ship, and I sold my fore-and-afters, or long clothes, to a slopman. When we had spent the whole of the money, I went on board with my new companions and entered. I was immediately put upon the ship's books, and ordered to do my duty in the afterguard, but soon after in the maintop. After the ship was completely fitted out, we dropped down to Long Reach, where I was again surprised to see my father and master come on board. They said but little to me, knowing it to be too late; but they

begged of the captain, Charles Smith, and the first lieutenant, Mr. Atkins, to be as favourable to me as possible, and gave them to understand all my faults. They then returned home, leaving me some pocket-money in the first lieutenant's hands.

We went two cruizes in the North Sea, accompanied by the Albicore, after which we were ordered to Sheerness, to fit out and take in provisions for six months. One evening, after clearing a lighter of provisions, on her shoving off from alongside, the topping-lift of her main-boom got over the outer boom-iron of our main-yard; we immediately let go the main braces, that she might not spring the yard. As she hung, with a rapid tide, I ran out upon the yard-arm, and began to cut away her topping-lift; but, before my knife had got through one strand, the heavy strain snapped the topping-lift all of a sudden, and the slack of the main brace, not being gathered in the yard, went with such a swing, that it threw me over the lighter into the middle of the stream. The boats were immediately manned and shoved off to pick me up, but neither officers nor men expected to find me, the night being very dark; and they thought the breath must certainly have been out of my body before I reached the water. One of the boats, the jolly-boat, luckily, not being

able to pull against the tide, drifting down to the point, came close to me, as I was swimming, as I thought, towards the shore; as soon as I saw her, I sung out, and they gladly hauled me in half-dead; they pulled up along shore, and we reached the ship, the officers all being greatly surprised. They gave me as much grog as I chose to drink. During the whole time I was in the water, I never let the knife go out of my hand. My father, being informed of the accident, came with all haste, and once more shewed the tender affection he had for me.

When the ship had completed her provisions, we were ordered to Portsmouth, and soon after to Plymouth, where we took a packet on board for Newfoundland. On the 10th day of May, 1794, we were chased by L'Unité, French frigate, of 44 guns, and, although we put on every stitch of sail we could, she came up with us fast: our captain, seeing it was to no purpose to try to outrun her, turned the hands up to shorten sail, and afterwards beat to quarters. I, being quartered in the main-top, had a clear view of her black sides, as she came up to windward; before she had time to take in her small sails, our main-top-sail was clapped to the mast, and our broadside poured into her. Superior as she was, we kept her at it at close quarters, for one hour and

three quarters; we had only two foremast-men, who were quartered in the mizen-top, and one marine killed, but several wounded. I was among the party of prisoners, with the captain, who was taken on board the frigate; the remainder of our crew being left on board our own ship. On the 24th, we were drafted on board different ships in the grand French fleet, which we that day fell in with. I was among a party that was sent on board Le Trajan, 84 guns. Some had the good fortune to be put on board Le Sanspareil, 84, which was soon after taken on the 1st of June.

On the 27th and 28th, we saw the English fleet to leeward, and on the 29th, some squadrons of our fleet came into action in the evening, but no ships were lost or taken. On the 30th and 31st, there was so thick a fog, that we could scarcely see the ship in the line a-head of us; but, on Sunday, the 1st day of June, very early in the morning, I was sitting on the Frenchman's bowsprit, in the fore stay-sail, when I heard them sing out from the mast-head, that the English were in sight, and I soon had the happiness of seeing their bright yellow sides. The Frenchmen piped to breakfast, but I can assure you, that there was scarcely an English prisoner on board that could eat for joy. The Frenchmen boasting, I got myself some good hard thumps for telling

some of them they would change their tune before sunset. As soon as they came nearly within shot, the prisoners were ordered into the main-hold, where we lost sight of what we so much wished to see. The ship we were in was dismasted, and reduced to a perfect wreck; but, unluckily for us, not taken. The French captain, seeing his decks covered with dead and wounded, ordered the prisoners double allowance of wine, and to lend a hand to rig a jury foremast, and, in a few days, we reached Brest;—a pretty sight, for the Frenchmen to see their lame ducks come in in a line!

We were soon landed and marched to Pontaneze, where we remained two or three months, very cruelly used: we were afterwards marched several days' march through the country to Quimper. The only town I can possibly recollect the name of, which we stopped at on our march, is Landerneau, where I and four more ran away from the guard, and, four days after, were taken very near the sea-coast. We were taken to Quimper, where we were ordered into the town-gaol, and I, being a boy, had only twelve-pound irons put upon my legs; but the other four had sixteens.

We were kept in this gaol six weeks, and afterwards put into the main prison of war, where

there were then three thousand three hundred prisoners, English, Dutch, Spanish, Portugueze, &c.; but, before three months, one thousand five hundred died with sickness and hunger. I myself was very near my last, had I not had the good fortune to find a friend, an American, of the name of Bodington, who continually advanced money to the English officers who could give sufficient security. Mr. Taylor, doctor of the Alert, who was the only officer of our ship in that prison, seeing me in the miserable condition I was, took me to Mr. Bodington's, where he indorsed a bill for five pounds upon my father. This little help saved my life, and I was soon perfectly well; but, not being contented to remain a prisoner, I and seven men made another attempt to escape, got over the prison walls by night, without being seen by the sentries, and took our course for the sea; but, five days after, we were taken and unmercifully used. We were then marched to the main road, to join the prisoners who were going from L'Orient and St. Maloes into the interior; but, before we reached them, we came to the city of Vannes, where we were put into the town-gaol, and very well used by the keeper and his family. After being there some time, the gaol-keeper's daughter, a very young girl, became so fond of me, that she got me liberty from her father to go

about as I liked, but the men were closely confined; indeed, the father, mother, and the whole family, grew so fond of me, that they did not wish me to be parted from them. One day, an order came to have the prisoners ready to march on the morning following; on hearing this, the whole family told me to pretend to be sick, when, they said, they would help to get me into the hospital. Accordingly the goal-keeper went to fetch a doctor from the Dispensary, telling the directors that a young English prisoner was dying with the fever. The girl, who was so fond of me, fearful that the doctor would find me out, persuaded her mother to do something to me to make me appear sick, and accordingly she boiled some tobacco and gave it to me to drink, which made me vomit and left me so sick and faint, that I could scarcely stand. In the middle of my feigned sickness the doctor came in, and, as soon as he had felt my pulse, ordered me immediately to the hospital: where they first gave me an emetic. The prisoners were marched away in the morning, and I being left behind, the doctor ordered me into the fever-ward, or the *salle de fiévre*, where I had only *bouillie* allowed me for two days, which made me curse the gaol-keeper's daughter, but, in a few days, I was ordered *demi* or half-allowance. I soon reported myself well, and the goal-keeper came to demand

me; but the head director, observing that there were no other prisoners of war in any of the prisons of the town, ordered me to remain with the steward of the hospital; and, in a short time, both the director and the steward, seeing the many services that I did them, became so fond of me that they gave me the office of *capitaine des infirmeries*, and accordingly the wine, bread, and meat, were all served out by me, and also weighed in my sight, and, in the steward's absence, I wrote the *bons* to the baker, butcher, &c., and a *bon*, written by me and signed with my name, was as valid as if the director or steward had written it himself.

The director often took me out riding with him, and gave me pocket-money, and indeed looked upon me as his own son; however, all this did not satisfy me: I rather wished to ride on board of one of my own country ships than the director's pony, and accordingly, hearing that the English fleet was in Quiberon bay, I agreed with some emigrants, or aristocrats, as they were called, to run away. These were five in number, none being much older or younger than myself, but very much more learned, and the sons of great families. We got over the hospital walls in the night, and directed our course towards the sea, with an intention to get among the loyalists in Quiberon; but, to our great misfortune, as we approached in the

evening very near to that place, which the English had put the loyalists in possession of, a very heavy firing began, which made us endeavour to hide ourselves, and we lay down among some sea-weed, that was on the beach at low water. We soon after heard the cry of "*Vive la Republique!*" which struck the young emigrants with so much terror, that they could scarcely tell what route to take. However, we set out along-shore as fast as we possibly could, until morning, when we met with some Bretons, who informed us that the loyalists were all taken by the republican general. Those Bretons were also afraid of being caught, as they had been employed in taking provisions to the loyalists. We were soon captured by some peasants, who had turned republicans, and were taken to Vannes and put into *la prison criminelle*, and the next day a sergeant and ten private soldiers came and marched us out of the prison; as we went through the town, I heard several of the people say "What has the little Englishman done? He is a prisoner of war, and not an arlstocrat;" on hearing which, I said to my companions, "What are they going to do with us?" One of them replied, "*You* are safe enough, but this is *our* last day;" and one of them was crying bitterly. I wondered greatly what was to be done with us, until we were marching *sur le Gazon*, a

hill outside of the town, where I saw the republican flag, and knew directly what was to be done. I immediately asked the sergeant of the guard if he was not mistaken, and did not know that I was a prisoner of war. He only laughed and gave me no answer whatever, and I began to be very much afraid, until we were halted before the French town-major and his guard. The five young emigrants, my companions, had their hands tied behind them, and a corporal took me by the hand, and led me to the town-major, who ordered me to the prison; but the director of the hospital, who was sitting with him, said, "Let him see his aristocrat companions shot first." There were several officers, who endeavoured to beg pardon for them, considering that they were very young, but to no purpose; they were immediately shot dead by the ten soldiers, who brought us from the prison. The director told the major not to send me into the prison, and said he would take care of me himself. The major laughed at me, and told me, if I ran away again with the emigrant prisoners I should be shot with them. I promised I would not, and the director ordered me to my former duty. The next day, I went to see the French emigrants, who were taken prisoners at Quiberon, march into the town; among them I saw several Englishwomen, who had come with the

Frenchmen from Southampton; these emigrant prisoners amounted to about seven hundred. They were all shot by divisions, sometimes fifty and sometimes less; they were not buried, but thrown into the river, about three miles below the town, where they were shot on the beach. The inhabitants of Vannes would not, at that time, buy any fish that were brought to the market, saying they were fed on the flesh of the aristocrats.

I learned from the Englishwomen, who had taken republican husbands in the town, that there were boats employed by the English to keep close to the beach near Quiberon, in the bay, by night; these boats were manned by, and belonged to, Breton loyalists, who took any loyalists who had made their escape from the republicans to the English squadron. I told a young emigrant, who was in the hospital, what I had learned from my countrywomen, taken prisoners with the loyalists who came from England to Quiberon; and he asked me, if what had passed had not made me frightened enough to drop all thoughts of running away; at which I only laughed, and told him, I would get among my own countrymen or lose my life. He, perfectly well knowing that I could get him safe through the Infirmary ward by night, desired me to be very particular in inquiring of the women, so that no mistake could be made.

I learned for truth that the signal the loyalists made to the boats was by a flint and steel, and, when on the beach, at the water's edge, to strike fire every now and then, but to be very particular that the fire might not be seen on either side, along the shore, as the sentries were placed very near each other. After providing ourselves with a flint and steel, I passed the young emigrant through the wards and over the walls, and we set out with all speed, going all the night, which was very dark, until daylight, when we went into an old nunnery to hide ourselves during the day, being about two miles from the beach; as soon as it was dark, we set out for the part of the beach, which we had seen best from the top of the nunnery. As we saw no boat, in the day-time, near the shore, nor any one stirring about the beach but the sentries, we began to be doubtful of the truth of our information; we went, however, up to our knees in the water, and managed to strike the light so that the sentries could not see it, and, in less than ten minutes, a boat came near enough to take us in without swimming. As soon as we were in the boat, the young emigrant told the Bretons who he was, and desired them to take him to the French loyalist general, Count d'Artois, on board the English transport; but the master of the boat told him that he expected some one else

whom he had purposely come to look out for; so we shoved off from the shore to a short distance, where we lay nearly an hour, when we saw a light struck very near the spot at which we were taken in. They skulled the boat in close to the water's edge, being afraid to pull, as the sentries might hear them. They took in a priest and some other loyalist, and shoved off, and pulled us on board of a *chasse-marée*.

The next day, I was sent on board La Pomone, Commodore Sir John Warren, and, after telling all the particulars to the captain, he ordered me into a mess. A few days after, the young emigrant came on board of the commodore with some French gentlemen, and, seeing me stand on the gangway, he called me to him and privately gave me ten English guineas, and told me to write my direction in English, where I was born, my father's name, &c., saying, "If God is good, I will some day do good for you."

I had not been long on board La Pomone, before I was sent on board a man of war brig, a prize which we took on the coast. We were sent to Portsmouth, where I saw an officer who was in Quimper prison. He was taken in the Castor frigate, and then belonged to the Bellerophon, 74, in dock, being the third lieutenant. As he knew me perfectly well, I applied to him to

get me my wages for the Alert, which he readily did, and he afterwards took me on board of the hulk to the first lieutenant. I was put on the Bellerophon's books, and ordered to do my duty in the main-top. I had before this time written to my father, who came as usual with all speed.

As it is too painful to me to give you any more particulars of my poor father's affection to me, I will make my letter as short as I can. I was not on board the Bellerophon more than six months, during which time we only went two cruizes, when I deserted at Portsmouth, and worked my passage to South Shields, in a small brig, which had delivered her cargo of coals at Portsmouth. I again worked my passage in another brig from Shields to London, and, as soon as we were as far up the river as Gravesend, I sent a letter to my sister, who still lived in the Minories. She soon informed my father, and he again came to Wapping Old Stairs, in a hackney-coach, and took me to a friend of his in the City. I remained in London about three weeks. My poor old father, seeing me still wild, was advised to send me as far from home as possible; and, accordingly, he bought me a large chest of clothing and every necessary a seaman could want, and, being acquainted with some gentlemen in the India House, he got me on board the Thames East Indiaman,

Capt. Williams, bound to China. On our passage to China I was taken very ill with the yellow jaundice, at St. Helena, but I soon got well. In our passage, we went through the Straits of Sunda, where we took a Malay prow belonging to the Dutch, from Batavia, laden with arrack.

We put into Amboyna, where, going frequently on shore with the captain, as I belonged to his boat, or barge, I took a fancy to see in what manner these Malays lived in the country, or inland parts of the island, and, if possible, to live some time among them. Accordingly I, with two more, agreed to swim from the ship by night, to the opposite side from the garrison, which we did, but, the great distance rendered us so weak that we could scarcely stand when we touched the bottom with our feet. We immediately set out from the beach inland, and at daylight arrived among some Malays, men and women, who were employed in packing up fruit to go to the town of Amboyna. We agreed to stop with these people for some time, and gave to the head man amongst them some money to go to the town to buy provisions and arrack. On his return we all sat down together, about thirty men and women, all nearly naked, and made a hearty feast; after we had eaten our fill of rice and dried fish, we began to drink the arrack, which soon took effect on the

Malays, and they began cutting extravagant capers, as if they were mad, and soon brought five or six Dutch swords, swearing they would kill us, as, they said, we had only come to intrigue with their women. We, each having a large stick, that we had cut on our road, began to defend ourselves. I got a cut on the thigh from one of them, but the old or head man among them, seeing that we were overpowered, agreed to take us to the town and deliver us up to the governor; which they did, and we were conveyed down the jetty with a guard of Sepoys, and sent on board our ship. We were immediately put into irons by Mr. Hall, the chief mate, and kept so until the ship sailed. As soon as the ship was under weigh, the hands were turned up to punishment: accordingly, we were brought on the quarter-deck, and the captain said, "Mr. Clark," (when I deserted from the Bellerophon I changed my name to my mother's) "you are the leader, your father told me of your wild tricks—I forgive those two, and will touch you up and make you tame if your father could not." Accordingly I was tied up and received two dozen lashes; and my grog was stopped for one month.

When we were at China, I went several times from Wampo to Canton in the barge with the captain, and afterwards upon leave, to receive two

months' pay at the factory, during which time I found some Armenians, who came into a Chinaman's shop, while I was buying a sea stock of sugar. I asked those merchants where they came from; and they told me that the caravan they belonged to went from China to Russia, and I begged of them to take me with them, which they said they could not do. I then told them I would desert from the factory by night, and would go with them as a servant, if they would take me; but they positively denied that they dared take me with them. The Chinaman, hearing all this, went to the captain, and told him I wanted to desert; so I was again made prisoner and punished as before, on board our ship, by the chief mate, who, having a great regard for me, spliced another dozen, which made three: he had also been persuaded by my father to tame me, if possible.

On our homeward bound passage, we put into the Cape of Good Hope, where I left the Thames and delivered myself up as a deserter, and went on board his Majesty's ship, the Sceptre, 64. Captain Williams, of the Thames, begged of the captain to return me, which he would have done, if I had not refused to go back, saying that I was a deserter from a king's ship. The captain said, "If you deliver yourself up as a deserter, I cannot send you back;" so I was put on the Scep-

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tre's books, and ordered to do my duty on the forecastle. In a short time, I was ordered into the captain's barge, as strokesman, and, when the coxswain was sick or on other duty, I often took his birth, and got greatly in favour with the captain, then Valentine Edwards. He very often told me, when steering him on board, by night, in strong south-easters, in Table Bay, that, if I chose, he would make me a midshipman, and that his son should teach me navigation, but I always refused, saying, I was not fit for the office.

We were ordered, by the admiral, to take part of the 84th regiment, with General Baird, to Madras; we first landed the troops at that place, and then took them on board again for Bombay, where our ship was put in dock, and the ship's company sent to Butcher's Island. During the time we were on the island, I heard a great many stories about the queen of Mahratta*, and a report was industriously spread among the ship's company, that all Englishmen who deserted and went into her service were made officers, generals, colonels, captains, &c. &c. One evening, while we were sitting in the barracks, we were nine or ten in number, drinking our day's allowance of grog, one of my messmates said, "We have been

* This is probably a mistake for the head of the Mahratta government.

long enough foremast-men; it is almost time we should be officers, and if you have a mind to swear to be true to each other, we will be officers or lose our lives." Accordingly, seven of us in number took our oaths to run away with the country boat, that brought our provision from Bombay to the island, and the next day we kept a good look-out, to see off what part of the beach they would anchor the boat for the night. At dark, we all swam to her, and, in cutting away her cable, wakened two Lascars who were sleeping in her; they soon gave the alarm, and our second lieutenant came with all speed, with a guard of marines, and fired three or four volleys at us, but to no effect: we were certain indeed that not one marine belonging to the ship would aim at us. As soon as we got about a mile from the island and close to the Isle of Elephanta, we hove the two Lascars overboard, so that they might swim on shore, for, if they had remained with us, they would have returned after we were landed, and given intelligence of what course we had taken.

From the time we landed we were three days before we reached Poonah: on our approaching that capital we fell in with an English soldier, who was himself a deserter from the Honourable Company's Madras Artillery; he had for some time been in the service of Holkar, and asked our

intentions, which we soon told him, when, like a repenting sinner, he began a mournful story. He told us that he had been for some days very ill with the flux, had no hopes of getting better, and was going to deliver himself up to the English Resident, then Colonel Palmer. He gave us some friendly advice, and we then set out for Scindia's camp, with all speed, before we should be reported to the Resident: but, previously to our being introduced to the chief, or head general, I had seen enough of the miserable situation of the European officers, and persuaded the rest of my messmates to leave the camp, and, if possible, to shape our course for Goa, and get on board a Portugueze ship. We hesitated for some time before we agreed, considering that the distance was too great, without provisions, but at last we were determined, if possible, to weather it out, and we started: but, before we were more than three miles from the camp, the Resident's guard overtook us, and we were made prisoners and taken to the Resident's son, Captain Palmer, who ordered us into the guard-house. During this imprisonment, the Resident and his son behaved more like fathers to their children than officers to deserters; they filled our bellies with good victuals, and afterwards sent a letter of recommendation to our captain, begging him to forgive us. When we

were sent to Bombay, Captain Palmer came to see us start, with a strong guard of Sepoys, and, observing that our feet were cut and much hurt by thorns and stones, he gave every one of us a pair of shoes, but, most of us being so sorefooted, we carried the shoes in our hands. After the second day's march we fell in with an English officer, and some Sepoys, with English muskets, belonging to Scindia; he told the Soubadar of our guard, that he had been to Panwell upon duty for Scindia: however, our guard greatly mistrusted him and took us to lodge as far as possible from him; but, in the evening, he sent a boy in disguise to us, and he, talking very good English, delivered his message very plainly. He said that Colonel White told him to tell us to run away in the night and come to him, and then we should be safe enough, for, if we went to Bombay, we should be sure to be hung by sentence of a court-martial. He said he had formerly deserted from the Suffolk, 74; and two or three of my messmates would have agreed, had not I and another sworn that we would rather be hung by our own countrymen than remain slaves among those black rascals.

We were therefore taken to Bombay, and put into the town-prison, our ship being then fitted out, and ready for sea. The captain came to see

us in the prison, and said to me, "Mr. Clark, I had a better opinion of you," and he went on board and sent a guard of marines to fetch us. As soon as we were on board, three of our party, being old offenders, were put in irons, and ordered to prepare themselves for a court-martial; we four were brought to the gangway, and punished with two dozen each, and were ordered to our duty as formerly. Our captain and officers were very good, and never kept this offence in their hearts; only sometimes, when I was to be at the wheel, they would laugh and say, "Mr. Clark, you wanted to be a general all at once."

When we arrived at Madras, our three companions were tried by a court-martial, on board the Suffolk, Admiral Rainier, and one, being an old offender, was sentenced to five hundred lashes from ship to ship, the other two, to one hundred and fifty each. The day they were punished, we were also ordered into the launch, to be towed round the squadron with them; we would have readily agreed to take each thirty or forty lashes in their stead, but we dared not say so.

We afterwards sailed for the Cape, with a convoy, and on our passage we burned a French privateer brig, in the island of Rodrigues, near the isle of France. Soon after our arrival, the admiral, Neilson, being dead, we became commo-

dore, ours being the oldest captain. On the 5th of November, I believe—though I do not exactly recollect that it was in the year 1798, but if you inquire of my brother Joseph for the exact dates, he will find them in my letters to my father—a very heavy north-west gale of wind came on, and such a heavy sea set into the bay, that the whole of the ships struck their topmasts and lower yards. We were at the same time refitting; however, to make short, we, soon after firing the salute for the 5th of November, began to part from our anchors, one after another, and then from our guns, which we lashed with the kedge-anchors, and were driven on the beach. We were not on shore long before a heavy sea hove our ship broadside on into the heavy surf, and she soon began to go to pieces. After I had parted from the wreck, I was immediately struck senseless by a spar, and all appeared like a dream to me, until I found myself in the hands of people rubbing my body before a large fire; we were between forty and fifty, who were saved out of the whole number of our crew, of four hundred, besides a number of invalids from India. Our poor captain, who behaved more like a father to the ship's company than otherwise, said, when we asked him, as he sat on the quarter-gallery while the ship lay on her beams, if we should try to save

him in the boat, then not cut away from the booms, "My dear fellows, we are now all captains alike, and every one must do the best for himself." These were the last words I ever heard him utter. Both he and his son, and every officer on board, were lost. Our first lieutenant, Mr. Pengelley, was on shore on leave. In the morning, after being taken from the beach, not quite sensible, I was surprised when I found myself with several others in a Dutchman's oven. One of our party had died; we, who were saved, were sent to the hospital. The second day after, I went to see if I could find out any of my messmates, that I might bury them separately, but every one was so much disfigured and bruised that I could not tell one from another: so they were buried like the rest, forty and fifty in one hole or grave, on the beach: but very few of them were brought to the burying-ground.

We remained in the hospital until the Lancaster, 64, Admiral Sir Roger Curtis, arrived; when we were immediately sent on board her. I was again sent on shore, with Lieutenant Walker, who was afterwards drowned in Saldanha Bay, with a party of the Lancaster's crew, to get up the Sceptre's guns, &c. that lay in shallow water; we were on shore about six weeks, and got up several of the guns and carriages, after which we went

to cruize off the Isle of France. While we lay off Port Louis, an Amboyna ship came round Cannonier Point, and got into the harbour in spite of us, although we fired several broadsides at her, and followed her so close in that the shells fell on all sides of us. This enraged our captain so much that he determined, if he lost every boat in the ship, to cut her out in the night.

Accordingly, Mr. Gray, the first lieutenant of the Adamant, 50, and our first lieutenant, Mr. Macfarlane, and several other officers of both ships, commanded the boats, and we shoved off all together in a line, just as it was getting dark, and before we came within musket-shot it was so dark that we could scarcely see the boat astern of us. The governor, being doubtful of our intention, had sent a great many people on board the ship to get her close in, and also some soldiers to guard her: as soon as they heard the noise of our oars in the water, they began to fire like thunder at us, but, I believe, only two were wounded while in our boats. Our first lieutenant had his right arm broken, when boarding, with the blow of a handspike. We soon drove them in great confusion, some overboard and some below, but we had several wounded, and, as soon as the batteries were opened upon us, we got her head towards the harbour's mouth and put all sail on her, but, it being almost

a calm, we were obliged to tow her during the whole time, while the shot from the two batteries, one on each side, were flying over us, though very little hurt was done. We had but two men killed outright, but several wounded: I was myself wounded in the loins by a splinter. We took our prize to the Cape, with several other prizes, and I was sent to the hospital, where I remained for five months before I recovered.

During this time, our ship went to cruize off the river La Plata. When she returned, I was sent on board of the Adamant, to go round to join her in False Bay. We soon after had the happy news of peace, and we all had hopes of once more being free in our own country. Some Dutch frigates arrived with a convoy of transports and troops for Batavia, and soon after, a Dutch squadron, with an admiral on board a 64, called the Pluto, came to relieve us. When the Dutch troops were landed, and the English troops embarked, a packet came about two hours before the keys of the castle were to be given up, with an order not to deliver up the Cape to the Dutch, there being still some dispute to be arranged. Soon after our packet, a Dutch packet came, so we moored in a line alongside of the Dutch men of war, with our guns kept double-shotted. The day after the Dutch packet arrived, there was an order for fifty English sea-

men to land from every ship, to protect the garrison, and marines to man Amsterdam Battery, the English transports having all sailed for India with the English troops. The seamen who were to be landed from our ship were chosen, and caps were made of canvas, and blackened and shined, with the ship's name in the front, in white letters. I was ordered to act as serjeant-major over all the small-armed party of seamen in the garrison; and the lieutenant, who was acting as our captain, gave me the privilege of seeing the provisions and wine served out, and all who went into the town, in their turns, upon leave, received a written pass from me. Shortly after a packet arrived, with an order to give up the Cape to the Dutch, and we were sent on board with our hearts full of joy, thinking we should once more sail for Old England, and be paid off; but how much were we surprised, when we saw the admiral's flag hoisted on board the Diomede, 50, and our captain and several others of the admiral's favourite officers go on board the Diomede, and Captain Fothergill come and take the command of us. However, we did not know the secret until we all got under weigh together. After we had passed Penguin Island, the admiral and his squadron kept on before the wind; the Tremendous, 74, hauled upon the wind to the southward, and we followed her example, the

admiral still keeping his course, as well as the rest of the ships with him. Our ship's crew looked one at the other, as if they had lost their senses, saying, "Where are we going to now it's peace?" However, this caused a great murmur in the ship's company, though nothing serious happened. When we arrived at Madras, we were told the whole; and the ship's crew soon began to be pacified and as happy as ever. After we had been some time at Trincomalee, in the island of Ceylon, and along the coast, a French squadron, under admiral Linois, arrived while we were in sight of Pondicherry. The admiral got under weigh with the squadron to meet them, and saluted. Both squadrons anchored in the roads, while we were left as guardship higher up on the coast. One night, a schooner-rigged vessel passed us; we hailed her, and she told us that she came from old France. We boarded in the guardboat, with the second lieutenant, Mr. Gilchrist; and I was ordered to go on board as interpreter; we went with her, until we brought-to alongside of our admiral. During the time we were on board of her, I learned from one of the foremast-men that war had again broken out, and that they had a packet on board for the French admiral Linois. I told Mr. Gilchrist of this, but he said we could do nothing without orders from England. The very same

night, or the night after, the whole French squadron slipped their cables, and got clear out without ever being missed until daylight. We got under weigh in search of them, and cruised in all parts where we were likely to find them. This cruise was a very unfortunate one; a great number of our ship's company died with the scurvy, and scarcely hands enough remained to work her. The admiral gave up the cruise, and we sailed for Bombay. I myself was so bad in the loins, from my old wounds, that I could scarcely get up the hatchway-ladders. When we arrived in Bombay, the doctor ordered me to the hospital, with several of the ship's crew, and, after I had been there some time, an inspection was made of the sick and wounded in the hospital, and I was invalided.

Shortly after, I began to get a great deal better, and, my wild tricks still haunting me, I tried to pass the sentry at the hospital gate without leave; the black Sepoy never said, "Where are you going?" or any thing else, but gave me a hard blow with the butt-end of his musket, which I soon took from him, and, in the scuffle, broke his bayonet, and gave him a thump on the temple, so that he fell to the ground. The sergeant and the guard came running to his assistance, and I fought my way through them, until I got into the ward of the

invalids, where, the next day, a search was made for me, and the Sepoy sergeant told the head doctor that he could find me out by a cut on the thumb and shoulder that he had given me. As soon as he had found me out, a sentry was ordered to watch me in the ward, until some officers belonging to the men of war should come. By this time the Lancaster, which had been in dock, had sailed, very happily for me, in the night. I pretended to have occasion to step out, which I did, and, while the sentry stood at the door, I got out of the window; the sentry at the gate was asleep, and I got through the small door without his hearing me. Being told that the sentry I had struck with the butt of his own musket was likely to die, I was very much alarmed, and made the affair known to Mr. Hall, an officer of the Honourable Company's marine, who took me on board the Antelope, and, for fear I should be known to any one by my name, I changed it to François Dilvaro, and we sailed to Mangalore, to take on board Lord Viscount Valentia, with whom we sailed for the Red Sea.

Dear sir, you know as well as I do every particular after that time. What I have written is all I can possibly recollect, but every word of it is real truth, and it may, perhaps, be the means of your not soon forgetting me. I hope you will

always consider me as your servant, though brought down to the very extremity through disease, in a foreign land, where charity, at the present time, is not known; for, believe me, I shall always consider you as my master and only friend in this world, and, if I never again may see you, I shall die in the hope that God will comfort our souls in the world to come. I can assure you, that when I go near the spot of ground where you last left me, not quite a mile from this, I often say in my heart, and sometimes to those that are with me, "This is the spot where I unwillingly took my last farewell of my poor friend, Mr. Salt," and a heavy shower of tears then runs from my eyes, as it does at this moment. I can assure you it was my wish to have gone a greater distance with you, if I had not been persuaded otherwise. It is not pleasant for me to trouble you with any more at present; so I conclude, remaining, until death,

Your very affectionate and humble servant,

NATHANIEL PEARCE.

P. S. If you find any blunders in my writing, you must lay the fault to my eyes, which are so very weak that I can scarcely see to read what I have written, except it be early in the morning.

For the remainder of the eventful life of this singular and adventurous man the Editor is indebted to the kind information afforded him by Mr. Coffin, who accompanied Pearce on his first voyage to Mocha; to Pearce's own narrative, given in Mr. Salt's last Travels in Abyssinia; and finally, to parts of the correspondence between that gentleman and Pearce.

On the arrival of Pearce, in the Antelope, at Mangalore, Lord Valentia and his suite were taken on board, and the ship immediately proceeded on her voyage to Mocha. On reaching that place, she remained a few days, to take in water, &c., and then pursued her course, on a survey of the coast of Africa, up the Red Sea, to Massowa, and so on to Suakin, where, an unfortunate misunderstanding taking place between lord Valentia and Captain Keys, the commander of the Antelope, the whole party returned to Mocha; whence, after residing in the factory a few days, Captain Keys took his departure for Bombay; but Pearce, knowing the perilous situation he should be placed in on his arrival at that settlement, deserted from the ship, swam on shore in the night, surrendered himself to the Dola, and turned Mahometan.

On the departure of the Antelope, Lord Valentia accepted the kind offer of Captain Vashon, of

the Fox frigate, to give his lordship a passage to Bombay; but, previously to the sailing of that ship, his lordship, Captain Vashon, his officers, and the English consul at Mocha, used the most strenuous endeavours to prevail on Pearce to return, unfortunately, at that time, without success; when his lordship went on board the Fox frigate, and proceeded on his voyage to Bombay, where, after a full investigation of Captain Keys's conduct, the Company's cruizer, the Panther, Captain Court, was ordered to proceed with his lordship again to the Red Sea, to complete the objects of his former voyage.

A few days after the arrival of the Panther at Mocha, Pearce, who had meanwhile become heartily sick of his new religion and his residence in Arabia, was met in the streets of Mocha by Mr. Coffin, who asked him what he thought of his present situation; to which he replied, he was heartily tired of it, and would give worlds to get away, begging Mr. Coffin to use all means in his power to get him removed from his forlorn and miserable condition. Mr. Coffin agreed, and, immediately on his return, communicated the poor fellow's despair and repentance to Lord Valentia and Captain Court; who, sincerely compassionating his situation, lost no time in taking such measures as they judged most likely to

ensure his escape. Accordingly, the night before the Panther sailed on her destination to Massowa, after a previous communication with Pearce, a boat was sent, to be in waiting on a retired part of the coast, as had been before arranged, to take him and several other English renegadoes on board. After the boat had waited some time, Pearce and another came to the appointed place, and were immediately taken to the ship, the hearts of the others having failed them. The next day, the Panther sailed to Massowa, where it was finally determined that the expedition to Abyssinia, which had been for some time in agitation, should be undertaken by Mr. Salt and Captain Rudland, accompanied by Pearce and some others.

The proceedings of the party, during its stay in the country, being already before the public, it is only necessary to observe, that, under all the circumstances of his case, it was judged most advisable that Pearce should remain behind in the country, not only as it accorded with his own wishes, but in many respects seemed likely to forward the views with which the expedition was originally undertaken. After leaving with him such necessaries and comforts as might be of service to him in the sequel, and strongly recommending him to the kindness and attention

of the Ras of Tigré, the party took their leave of him and returned to Massowa.

For some time subsequently to the departure of Mr. Salt from the country, the Ras, in his treatment of Pearce, appears to have religiously adhered to his promise of affording him his friendship and protection; he was placed in the service of Ozoro Setches, a lady of the highest rank, and the legitimate wife of the Ras, with whom he remained as a kind of confidential friend for about half a year, in the full enjoyment of her favour and countenance. Unfortunately, however, the high estimation in which he was held both by that lady and the Ras excited the jealousy of some of the most influential chiefs at the court; who, gradually instilling their own unjust prejudices into the mind of the Ras, induced him to treat Pearce with indifference and neglect, and to deprive him of many of the privileges which had previously been granted to him. The natural turbulence of Pearce's spirit was ill calculated to support, with the requisite patience, this change in his situation and circumstances, and led him to remonstrate on the occasion, with a degree of violence that lost him, for a time, the favour of the Ras, and reduced him to a state of absolute dependence upon some of the young chieftains of the court.

During this temporary disgrace, he judiciously employed his time in acquiring a knowledge of the Tigré language, which, he wisely judged, could alone enable him to get the better of his enemies, whenever a fair field should open to him for the display of his zeal and ability. An occasion of this nature shortly occurred, in March 1807, when a powerful league was formed, by many of the most formidable chiefs in the interest of the descendants of Ras Michael, for the destruction of Ras Welled Selassé; who, raising a powerful army to oppose the insurgents, quickly reduced them to unconditional submission: but, before the affair was finally concluded, an opportunity was afforded to Mr. Pearce of displaying his courage and fidelity. While the negociations for peace were going on, a plot had been formed by some of the hostile chiefs to burn the Ras at his quarters in Adowa, where he lay, in the full confidence of victory, at some distance from his army and very slenderly attended. The scheme had nearly succeeded, and part of the premises were already in flames, when Mr. Pearce, who was encamped with the army outside of the town, being awakened by the glare of light, seized his musket, and, hastening to the spot, rushed undauntedly through the flames, to the assistance of the old man; when the fire was shortly after

extinguished, and the chiefs implicated in the plot were taken, in a great degree through the instrumentality of Pearce, and punished. The courage and promptitude he evinced on this occasion restored him to the favour of the Ras, who gave him a white mule, encreased his allowances, and appointed him to the honour of attending Ozoro Turinga, a sister of the Ras, with an escort, back to Antàlo.

This favourable state of affairs, however, was not of long duration: the jealousy of his enemies and his own impetuous temper quickly brought on an absolute rupture between him and the Ras; and he threatened to go over to his great enemy, Gojee, which so incensed the old man, that he told him, though he would prevent his putting that plan in execution, yet he might go any where else he thought proper, provided he never appeared in his presence again. In consequence of this dispute, Pearce left Antàlo, and for some time led a kind of wandering life in different districts of Abyssinia and some of the bordering countries, where he was generally received with kindness and hospitality, till he determined, at length, to shape his course to Samen, and visit Ras Guebra, the powerful governor of that province. During the journey he passed over the summit of the lofty mountain Amba Hai, which

he found tremendously difficult in the ascent, and, after descending gradually on the other side for about five hours, arrived at Inchetkaub, the capital of Ras Guebra, by whom he was hospitably received, and kindly advised to return to Antàlo, and make up matters with the Ras, though for that time without success. Shortly after his arrival at Inchetkaub, he was attacked by an inflammation in his eyes, greatly resembling ophthalmia, which nearly confined him to his bed, and was probably occasioned by the glare of the snow, to which he had been exposed in passing over the high mountains of Samen. While lying in this miserable state, he was visited, in the absence of his servants, by a woman with whom he had formerly been well acquainted. She brought a young man with her whom she called her brother, and both expressed so much joy at seeing Pearce, and appeared so sincerely to commiserate his situation, that he was quite overcome by the interest they took in his welfare. The conclusion, however, of the affair, was not quite so agreeable, as he discovered, soon after their departure, upon the return of his servants, that they had plundered him of every thing he possessed, except his musket, which lay under his pillow, and the garments which he wore. The woman, being taken a day or two afterwards, confessed the robbery,

and several articles were recovered; but the greater part, together with his Journal, had been carried off by her companion, who effected his escape.

The loss he had thus sustained, joined to the weak state of his health, made Pearce give up the idea of advancing farther into the country; and, hearing about this time, from some of his Tigré friends, that the Galla, under Gojee, had advanced to attack the Ras Welled Selassé, as far even as Antàlo, he determined to forget all past misunderstandings and hasten to the assistance of his former master. In this generous, and, as it afterwards turned out for him, fortunate, resolution, he was supported by Ras Guebra; who, on parting with him, in December 1807, made him some handsome presents, and sent with him one of his confidential messengers, to speak in his favour to Ras Welled Selassé. After taking his leave, Mr. Pearce proceeded rapidly on his journey, till he reached the banks of the Tacazzé; where, owing to the swollen state of the river, some delay occurred in crossing it; but the passage was at length accomplished with great difficulty, and the party, on the 29th of December, reached the neighbourhood of Antàlo. As Pearce and his companions advanced, they found the country in great alarm at the near approach of Gojee, who

had gained possession of a large portion of Lasta, and was within a day's march of Enderta. This intelligence caused Pearce to hasten his progress, and he reached the gateway of the Ras early on the morning of the 30th.

On his arrival, many of the chiefs expressed their astonishment at seeing him, and strongly urged him not to venture into the presence of the Ras; but Pearce felt too proudly conscious of the motives that prompted him to return to feel any apprehension, and requested an audience of the Ras, to which he was immediately admitted. As he approached the old man, he thought he saw, as he expresses it, "something pleasant in his countenance," as he turned to one of his chiefs, and said, pointing to Pearce, "Look at that man! he came to me a stranger, about five years ago, and, not being satisfied with my treatment, left me in great anger; but now that I am deserted by some of my friends, and pressed upon by my enemies, he is come back to fight by my side." He then, with tears in his eyes, desired Pearce to sit down, ordered a cloth of the best quality to be thrown over his shoulders, and gave him a mule. and a handsome allowance of corn for his support.

Soon afterwards, the Ras, having assembled his army, marched against the enemy, and, after

some skirmishing and shew of negociation, Gojee shifted his ground to the plains of Maizella, which he had determined should be the place of action, and the Ras took up his station close to the Ain Tacazzé for the night. In the morning, a last attempt was made by the Ras for an accommodation, which was haughtily rejected by Gojee, and both parties prepared for a decisive engagement on the following morning. In the action that ensued, the Ras appears to have arranged his forces with considerable skill, but the impetuous charge of the Galla upon his centre, where he commanded in person, forced it to give way. The Ras, enraged at the sight, called for his favourite horse, which was held back by his chiefs, who felt anxious for his personal safety, when the old man urged his mule forward and galloped to the front; where, by his conspicuous appearance and gallant demeanour, he quickly infused fresh energy into his troops and retrieved the fortune of the day. On this critical occasion, Pearce was among the first in advance, and the Ras, seeing him in the thick of the fight, cried out, "Stop, stop that madman!" but he called in vain. Pearce dashed on, killed a Galla chief of some consequence, and by his courage throughout the day gained the admiration of all around him. Gojee himself escaped with difficulty, and his

whole army was totally routed. In the course of the many desperate enterprises in which the Ras was engaged subsequently to this celebrated victory, Pearce, who always accompanied him, had several opportunities of distinguishing himself and of establishing a high character for intrepidity and conduct.

After this harassing campaign, the Ras returned in triumph to Antàlo, where he and some of the principal chiefs shewed Pearce the highest marks of their favour and admiration. The blessings of peace succeeded for a time the horrors of war; and about this period Pearce married a pleasing girl, the daughter of an old Greek, named Sidee Paulus: but this tranquillity was of short duration. Subegadis and his brothers refused, early in 1809, to pay their customary tribute, and otherwise forced the Ras into a difficult and predatory war among the mountains, which furnished Pearce with fresh opportunities for signalizing his activity and personal bravery.

On one of these occasions, he would have inevitably lost his life but for the generosity of one of his opponents. He had been ordered, with some of the Ras's people, to seize a number of cattle, known to be concealed in the neighbourhood, and the party succeeded in securing above

three hundred; but, owing to a stratagem Guebra Guro's, one of the brothers of Subega he lost a number of men in the enterprise. T chief and about fourteen of his best marksn had placed themselves, in a recumbent posti on the brow of an inaccessible rock, whence t picked off every man who ventured within musk shot. At one time, Pearce was so near this d gerous position, that he distinctly heard Gue Guro order his men not to fire either at h Pearce, or at Ayto Tesfos; calling out to th at the same time, "to keep out of the range his matchlocks, as he was anxious no perso harm should happen to his friends." The R finding he could make little or no impress upon the wary enemy he had to encounter, bu the town of Makiddo, and returned with his ar to Adowa.

On his arrival at that place, Pearce receive letter from Captain Rudland, the East India Co pany's agent at Mocha, dated May 17th, 18 requesting him to go down to Buré, where would meet him. This promise, however, it a pears that gentleman was unable to perform; a on Pearce's reaching the coast, he found hims almost alone in the midst of a barbarous and sa guinary race, and nearly without money, pro sions, or protection.

In this deplorable state he remained till the 20th of July, when, from the want of food, he was forced to dismiss the Abyssinian escort that had accompanied him, and to wait patiently for the arrival of Captain Rudland, with only four servants; all of whom, with himself, would probably have perished from want, had it not been for the kindness of the master of an Arabian dow, who humanely supplied the party with some *zuwarry* and dates in exchange for a bill on Mocha. After remaining in this unpleasant situation for some time, and narrowly escaping from a plot laid against his life, he was, at length, relieved in some measure, by the arrival of a dow from Mocha, with Mr. Benzoni on board, who persuaded him, much against his will, to take charge of a cargo of goods for Abyssinia, through the barbarous tribes, of whose want of hospitality and good faith he had already had so bitter an experience. Before Mr. Benzoni took leave of Pearce, he made him some useful presents, and gave him a hundred dollars; of which, however, from the circumstance having transpired, he was completely stripped by the cupidity of the savage borderers, before he reached the frontiers of Abyssinia.

The articles placed under his charge were very near sharing the same fate, and, on one occasion

in particular, he was obliged to protect them, at the hazard of his life, by shooting one of his treacherous conductors. Luckily for Pearce, he had then entered the frontiers of Abyssinia, and the report of his blunderbuss brought the people of the district around him, when his villanous guides, with their wounded companion, fled in great alarm, and Pearce proceeded, without farther molestation, on his route to Chelicut; where the sagacity, intrepidity, and talent, he had displayed, throughout the whole of the expedition, secured him a most flattering reception.

A few months after these transactions, Mr. Salt arrived in the Red Sea, upon his second mission to Abyssinia, and it was probably fortunate for him that Pearce's journey had been completed before his arrival in those parts; as he had, at first, determined upon following the same route, in preference to his former one by Massowa, till he received letters from Pearce, strongly dissuading him from making an attempt, which sad experience had taught the latter to be fraught with almost insurmountable difficulties and dangers. The receipt of this intelligence induced Mr. Salt to alter his intention, and he, in consequence, steered his course to Massowa, where he was joined by Pearce and Ito Debbib, with a party of Abyssinians, on the 10th of February,

1810, and proceeded, without any serious accident, to the Ras's residence at Chelicut.

From circumstances related in his Travels, Mr. Salt's stay in Abyssinia was only of short duration, and, after remaining a few months, he bade a final adieu to the country, leaving behind him with Pearce the supercargo of the ship, Mr. Coffin, to whose voluntary zeal, promptitude, and courage, the whole expedition, on its first arrival at Amphila, had been greatly indebted. Previously to Mr. Salt's departure, he strictly enjoined Pearce to keep a regular journal of passing events, and of the adventures in which he might be engaged—a request with which, in spite of the subsequently distracted state of the country, Pearce appears generally to have complied.

The result of his industry is now, for the first time, submitted to the public; and to it the reader is referred for such particulars of the Author's life as occurred between the years 1810 and 1819, when he arrived at Cairo. On his reaching that city, after having encountered many difficulties and perils, both by sea and land, he found that Mr. Salt was absent on an excursion into Upper Egypt; and, being anxious to meet him with the least possible delay, he set off on a voyage up the Nile, in search of his friend and benefactor: the meeting between them is not

described in the Journal, which breaks off very abruptly; but it appears, from some original letters, that he was received by Mr. Salt with that warm-hearted kindness and liberality, which ever distinguished the character of that benevolent and lamented individual.

The conclusion of Pearce's history may be briefly told. On his return to Cairo, he was entrusted with the entire direction of Mr. Salt's household, when the duties of the Consulship demanded the attendance of the latter in other stations; a capacity in which he appears to have surpassed the expectations of his master, by his economy and general management of the establishment. During his short residence at Cairo in this situation, he arranged and wrote his Journal from the various documents he had brought with him, or from time to time forwarded from Abyssinia to Mr. Salt. It will be seen by extracts from letters still in existence, inserted by Mr. Salt in his Appendix, how highly he estimated the Journal as a faithful, characteristic, and animated description of the customs, manners, and laws, of the Abyssinian people, and which, it is greatly to be regretted, his ill state of health, domestic misfortunes, and the augmentation of his official duties, prevented him from personally inspecting, according to his expressed intention.

Besides the Journal, Pearce was at this time employed by the Rev. Mr. Jowett in translating portions of the New Testament in the Tigré language, for the use of the Church Missionary Society, and at one time he had, under the auspices of Mr. Salt, actually set out on a journey to Jerusalem with Mr. Jowett, which, however, from some cause that does not appear, was subsequently abandoned.

The chequered life of this remarkable individual was now fast drawing to a close. In the early part of the year 1820, Mr. Salt, having some articles of consequence, which he wished to have safely conveyed to England, and having previously been informed that the R. prefixed to Pearce's name at the Admiralty had been erased, through the kind interference of the Earl of Mountnorris, Sir Joseph Banks, and the Right Honourable Charles Yorke, thought the opportunity a favourable one for the return of the wanderer to his native land. A passage was accordingly secured for him, in a ship that was about to sail in a few days, and every accommodation provided, when he caught a violent cold, which, being greatly aggravated by the mistaken and somewhat intemperate use of brandy, quickly turned to a raging fever, with which his constitution, long debilitated by hardship and disease,

was wholly unequal to struggle, and which carried him off, at Alexandria, early in June, 1820, at the age of about 41 years. A short time previously to his dissolution, he made his will, in which he bequeathed his Journal, and the whole of his papers, to Henry Salt, Esq., one of his executors, who presented the former and many of the latter to the Earl of Mountnorris, to whose kindness and friendship the Editor is indebted for the possession of the Journal.

JOURNAL,

ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Ras Welled Selassé—Submission of Guebra Guro, and his brothers, Subegadis, Sardie, and Agoos, to the Ras—They again rebel—Unite with the Gusmati Ischias, Ras Michael's grandson, and other chiefs, to take the province of Tigré—Are driven by the Ras's troops across the river Ṭacazzé—Visit of Ras Ilo; his reception at Chelicut—Ras Welled Selassé takes the field against the Rebels—Mountain of Ambaarra, a stronghold of Subegadis—He is dislodged from it—Preparations for War with Guxo—The Gusmarsh Salada—Defeat of Guxo's army—Gojee—His barbarity—Guebra Guro again makes his submission—Forged Letter respecting Pearce and Coffin—Reports concerning a white Traveller—Displeasure of the Ras with Pearce, and reconciliation—Present to the Ras from the King of Shoa—Battle between Baharnegash Subhart and Shum Woldi—Death of Nebrid and Funeral Ceremonies—Tusfu Mariam, one of the Ras's Chiefs, surprised by Subegadis and slain—Operations of Guxo—Guebra Guro confined—Submission of the Gusmati Ischias and other rebel Chiefs—Ravages of the Small-pox—Superstitions of the Abyssinians in regard to Diseases.

At the latter end of May, 1810, Ito Subegadis, and Guebra Guro, under pretence of making it up with Ras Welled Selassé, against whom they had rebelled, sent to him their brother, whose name was Sardie, and who, throughout the rebellion, had been with the Ras, and was a great

favourite with him, to declare, that if the Ras would share the country belonging to their father, between the four sons, viz. Subegadis, Sardie, Guebra Guro, and Agoos, they would come in to him; to which he, the Ras, agreed. Accordingly, Guebra Guro arrived, on the 6th of June, at Mucculla, and came before the Ras, with a stone upon his neck, which is customary on such occasions, and the Ras forgave him. His brother, Subegadis, was left at home, under pretence of illness, but it was soon ascertained to be a mere feint, for carrying on, with the less suspicion, his farther rebellious practices; while his brother, Guebra Guro, being then with the Ras, and in apparent amity, served as a blind to the intended treachery.

This last notorious rebel twice visited the Ras, who gave him a *shummut* or district, and treated him with great attention. One day, while he was at Chelicut, there was a great feast among the priests of the Ras's church at that place, in the Ras's presence, and at his house; when, after eating and drinking till the priests began to be merry and dance in their usual fashion, some of the Ras's soldiers, being pretty merry also, from the quantity of maize they had drunk, began to exhibit before their master, in the Abyssinian fashion, and to boast of their prowess, and the

great feats they had done, and would do, in his service. Among the rest, Guebra Guro started up, with his *shuttle*, or knife, drawn, and a *bruly* or goblet of maize in his hand, saying, "Hold your tongues! by the Ras's flesh, I am Guebra Guro, I am a lion, I am a slave to the Badinsah." Having made an end of his boasting, he said, "I have been a rebel these two years against my master; but, for the time to come, if ever I behave otherwise than as a slave to the Badinsah, I am no longer a Christian, in which faith I was bred and born;" then, catching hold of his *martab*, or the blue thread round his neck, which distinguishes a Christian, he cut it in two, adding that he hoped he might be cut down, as he had cut his *martab*, if he did not behave as he had promised; at which the Ras's people were very much pleased and gave him great applause.

Next day we went to Antàlo, where the Ras gave Guebra Guro a very handsome matchlock and a horse; he also showed him the presents brought him from England by Mr. Salt. After taking leave of the Ras, Guebra returned with me and Mr. Coffin to Chelicut, and it being on his road home, he stopped at my house about three hours, ate and drank with us, and afterwards began to discourse about the Ras going to war with the Amhara. He said, that, if it so hap-

pened, he should wish to swear us beforehand to be to him as brothers; that he would provide us with honey, flour, and sheep, for the expedition; and that we should find powder and shot. To get rid of our troublesome friend, I told him, that, though we never swore upon such occasions in our country, yet, that if once we said the thing, we would stand to it. He then begged a little powder of me and took his leave.

This was on Thursday, and, on the Thursday in the following week, news was brought to the Ras, that Subegadis and Guebra had raised a strong army of rebels, bound their brother Sardie, and fought against the country of Derra, and taken the chief of that district, named Abba Golam Carsu, besides killing a great number of people, and burning several towns and villages. Abba Golam Carsu is accounted a very hard-fighting and brave Abyssinian, but was overpowered by Subegadis and his brothers. The Ras was very much concerned about him; at the same time the Gusmati Ischias, Ras Michael's grandson, who never had been quiet three years together since the commencement of Ras Welled Selassé's government, from the notion that he himself was best entitled to be Ras, appeared also in rebellion, and joined Nebrid Aram, formerly governor of the province of Adowa, and a servant to the Ras,

who had previously taken up arms. These two chiefs, together with Palambarus Guebra Amlac, and Shum Temben, settled that Subegadis should meet them at Adowa, where they were to unite and take the whole of Tigré, and that Guxo was to come from Gondar, and join them to take Enderta.

Ras Welled Selassé was at first for marching to Tigré himself, had he not been prevented by his Blitingatore, Woldi Gorgis, and Palambarus Toclu, who sent him word that it was not worth his while to trouble himself about such rebels as those, since they, with the other chiefs of Tigré, who still remained friends to him, together with his troops then in Tigré, would be enough to destroy, or otherwise drive them out of the country; to which the Ras agreed, and stopped accordingly at Antàlo. Before the two parties of rebels could join, the Ras's forces had pursued the Gusmati Ischias and his associates, till they found them encamped near Axum, in the plain, called Attsowo; these, finding that the Ras's troops were too strong for them, made off, with some loss, to the other side of the Tacazzé, whither they had previously sent the cattle they had plundered in that part of Tigré.

They also met with the Walkayt Negadi *cofla*, which they plundered of a very great quan-

tity of elephants' teeth, and a thousand pieces of Walkayt cloth, cotton, &c. Being followed by the Ras's troops, they made but a short resistance, on the bank of the Tacazzé, and then fled across the river, quite out of the Ras's dominions. The Ras's troops encamped there, rioting upon their plunder, until the rebels were quite distressed for want of provisions; when they were glad to retire to Waldubba, where they remained till the Gusmarsh Guxo sent his head general, or Gusmarsh, Ackly Marro, to meet them, by whom they were kindly received at Wogara, and thence conveyed to Guxo, who was then in Gondar. He received them very honourably, and afterwards reviewed their troops, telling them not to fear, as by the month of Tesas, or December, he would give them Tigré, Enderta, and all the Ras's dominions, and then ordered them, namely, to Gusmati Ischias one hundred *churns* of corn, which is eight hundred bushels; the same to Nebrid Aram; fifty *churns* to Palambarus Guebra Amlac, and fifty to Nebrid Aram's wife, Ozoro Wolleta Michael, daughter of Ito Debbib, Ras Welled Selassé's younger brother, though as great a rebel as her husband.

During this time, Ras Ilo, of Lasta, came upon a visit to Ras Welled Selassé, at Chelicut; I and Mr. Coffin went on horseback to meet him, but

we returned at full speed, having received a message from the Ras, who desired us to proceed as fast as possible to Chelicut, and have a salute ready for Ras Ilo, on his entrance into that place. At his arrival, he was saluted with five guns, in the English fashion, by me and Mr. Coffin, with one of the three-pounders brought into the country by Mr. Salt, the other being at Mucculla. When he had approached within five hundred yards, we began, and fired five times with English cartridges, before the party could advance half way. Indeed, Ras Ilo was so struck by the unexpected explosion, that, had he not seen our old Ras ride on the quicker, I believe he would have gone back. It gave him great surprise to behold the rapidity with which we could load and fire, as his attendants could not have loaded and fired a matchlock even twice in the same space of time. The Ras, in the course of the same day, begged us to show them the English exercise, at which I professed myself a good hand; the motions I first went through, and the discharging of five or ten cartridges as quick as possible astonished Ras Ilo and his attendants. Ras Ilo had never seen a cannon in his life before, and seeing it run, with its utensils, &c., on its carriage, he was quite astonished, and said, in a low tone, "I thought there was no country like our

own for instruments of war, but I now find I was mistaken."

This chief remained some time at Chelicut; it appeared that he was alarmed by Guxo, who had threatened him as well as the rest. The Ras, on his departure, performed *shillimho*, that is, dressed him out very fine in silks, a regular custom upon such visits. He also gave him five handsome matchlocks, and four large and two small Turkish and Persian carpets, of great value in this country. After Ras Ilo had taken leave of the Ras, he gave me a mule and a good sheepskin dress, and a sheepskin to Mr. Coffin, with promises of future friendship; he left Chelicut on the 3d of July. The Ras remained there for some time afterwards, and then went to Antàlo. On hearing that Subegadis was plundering and destroying all the neighbouring countries, and that nobody could face him, he ordered all to be got ready against Kudus Yohannis, or St. John's day, which is the first day of Mascarram, or September, and the drum was beaten in the marketplace, to order all Enderta, Giralta, Temben, Saharte, Overgalle, Bora, Salora, Dova, Wojjerat, Womburta, Dacer, &c., to be ready at that time; and join him at Aggulah. Tigré and Shiré were left to take care of the country, against the other rebels, who had gone to the Amhara.

I and Mr. Coffin went with the Ras and his army to Mucculla, taking our horses, arms, &c., with provisions necessary for the campaign.

When we joined the army, on the Thursday following, the Ras was very much displeased at not finding all his chiefs, as he expected; but, on our march, the next day, he became better satisfied, on seeing his troops hourly joining him by thousands. About four thousand horse and thirty thousand foot joined him, that evening, at Arramat; the whole of the musketry amounted to about eleven hundred, the remainder were spear and shield men.

The next day we marched to Aggulah, where we stopped until Monday; the Abyssinians, from motives of piety, never marching on a Sunday or on any holydays with an army. From Aggulah, we advanced to Adegraat, in the country of Agamé, where Subegadis, hearing of the Ras's approach, immediately fled. When we had destroyed all the corn, and burned every town and village in that part, we marched to Asuffa, where Subegadis had been the night before, but left it as the Ras approached.

We stopped here six days, until our cattle had consumed all the green corn, and then marched to Gundegunde, at which place stands, as the natives report, one of the most ancient churches

in Abyssinia, named Redan-er-merrit. Though it is in the Taltal country, the priests defend it easily, as the ascent to it is so steep that one man could defend it against a thousand. This church it is superstitiously believed in the country was built by God; in it a large book is preserved that is held in great veneration, and is said to have been written by order of queen Helena, or Eleanor. We here learnt that Subegadis had taken to his strong mountain-hold close by; where he meant to give battle to the Ras, if he dared to approach, thinking it impossible that so strong a position could be stormed.

This mountain is called Ambaarra, and it is one of the highest I have seen in Abyssinia. Amba Hai and Behader may be seen from its summit; and, from the other side, the sea, which, I suppose, may be about six or seven leagues distant. It is very difficult of ascent, and, as no mules can go up it, we stopped, and encamped at Gundegunde, until the 13th of September. Very early that morning, we began to march towards the foot of the mountain, the Ras having sent forward a storming party at midnight, unknown to most of his chiefs.

About eight o'clock, we arrived at the foot of the mountain, when, alighting from our mules, I sent them back to the camp. The road we came

upon our mules was a very steep hill. We now began to climb the height, and could plainly hear the storming party, which the Ras had sent under the command of Chellica Woldi Michael, one of his favourites, engaging the enemy; a continual fire of muskets being kept up above us. I and Mr. Coffin began to ascend long before the Ras; and came, in about an hour, to the spot, where we found Subegadis enjoying the pleasure of picking off the Ras's soldiers as he thought proper, although they were more than one hundred feet above him. It was impossible to see any of his men, the loose rocks and the entrenchments he had made being covered with the trunks of large trees, which had been cut down for that purpose; and the steep precipice, opposite to which they stood, would not permit above one or two at a time to be lowered down to attack them; in attempting which, they were shot by Subegadis's soldiers and rolled down to the foot of their entrenchments.

I and Mr. Coffin stood among the Ras's soldiers, thinking we might get a shot through the holes, whence the fire of the rebels was directed; but, finding it of no use, and that it was impossible to see any thing but solid rocks and entrenchments to fire at, and about fifteen men being already killed close to us, we sat ourselves down

in a secure place until the Ras should come up. Upon his approach, the soldiers came running and roaring like wild beasts, firing sometimes a hundred muskets together, though there was nothing to direct their aim but the smoke of the enemy's guns. Subegadis, however, finding himself short of powder, and seeing that as fast as his enemies were killed others advanced nearer and nearer, and having besides no water, began to be alarmed for the situation he held, lest he should be surrounded, and therefore made his retreat up the mountain opposite to us, where he again fought very hard, and killed great numbers as they attempted to ascend; but, our troops being so numerous, he was obliged to fly, four of his bravest officers being killed, and a great number of his men cut off. Our troops were now so thoroughly wearied, that it was impossible for us to follow much farther; and Subegadis himself was so worn out with fatigue, that he was obliged to drop his shield to one of the Ras's soldiers, who was within ten yards of him, and the latter was so tired that he could pursue no farther.

The rocks were indeed so very steep that, in order to descend them, we were obliged at times to go upon our hands and feet, and to creep down backwards; which enabled Subegadis, with

his brothers and a number of soldiers, to escape, and take refuge near the sea-coast, in the country of the Taltals or Bedouins. The Ras, being very anxious to follow, we kept descending until evening, when we stopped, not more than half-way down the mountain, for the night. There the Ras took up his quarters between two large pieces of rock: while I and Mr. Coffin slept with his guards, lying round him in a circle.

In the morning, we again began to descend, the Ras being obliged to go on foot, as well as ourselves, until we reached the wilderness; below which we pursued the tired rebels until night. Some of the Fit-aurari's soldiers killed a few, who were wearied almost to death, and took two hundred head of cattle, which they killed and left behind, being too tired to drive them forwards.

We stopped in this *barakei*, or wilderness, until the next morning, and then began to return, the soldiers being greatly exhausted and in want of water. On our return, I and Mr. Coffin, with about four hundred of the Ras's soldiers, lost the Ras in the woody desert, when in search of water, and during the night were encamped by ourselves, almost starved, and crying out "No bread, no water." Next day, we fell in with about six hundred of the Ras's soldiers, who, upon seeing us, at first thought they had

found the Ras, who had been lost all night as well as ourselves; we searched all day for him, but to no purpose, and the next day determined to go to the camp, where the baggage and our provisions were left. We reached on the following day. Upon seeing us come towards the camp, they of course thought the Ras could not be far off, as they did not know where he was any more than we. After refreshing ourselves with a little maize and *berenter*, we built a *goja**, and slept comfortably until next morning. Our tent came up next day, and while we were pitching it we heard that the Ras had fallen in with a great number of the rebels' cattle, which he had taken, and was encamped on a mountain not far off: upon which, we saddled our mules, and started immediately, leaving our horses and baggage to follow, and, in about three hours reached the Ras's camp upon the mountain, where we found that he had got a large *goja* built, and meant to stay some time. He talked with me and Mr. Coffin some time, and asked us how we came to lose ourselves; when, after stating to him how it had happened, he seemed satisfied and laughed heartily.

We stopped three days upon this mountain,

* The name of tents built with boughs.

where we lived pretty well, there being plenty of corn in a village at the top, belonging to the rebels, and having maize* brought from the main camp. We marched hence to Ardergahso, where we joined the main army, which had received orders to meet us there. Having burnt the town of the above name, we stopped two days, and then marched to the plain of Ardergahso; where the corn was ready to cut, which it took us five days to destroy. We marched thence to the river Munnai, the finest country in that part of Abyssinia for corn and cattle, where we stopped a week to destroy every thing. Here is the famous church, Kudus Michael, the neighbourhood of which is remarkable for a kind of red cabbage, called *hamley ganet*, or the cabbage of paradise. Thence we proceeded to Deverer Martior, a country belonging to the Tigré Murernan Woldi Samuel. The road over the mountain this day was so bad, that we lost a great number of asses and mules; and a few men and women, who were obliged to give way in the throng, fell over the precipices and were dashed to pieces.

We next marched to Kerserou, on our return to Enderta, and then to Ardat, and encamped

* Maize is a good beverage made of honey and *tsudder*. In the Amharic it is called *tsug*. *Berenter* is a common loaf, baked upon the coals, with a hot stone in the middle of it.

about two miles from the spot where we had been formerly stationed on our advance from Erdereh; on account of the dead carcases of asses left behind. We stopped here till the 30th of October; the camp being very unhealthy, and I myself so very ill that the Ras thought it best to send me home to Chelicut. Mr. Coffin accompanied me, and we arrived there on the 8th of November.

November 11th. The drum was beat, and orders were issued in the market-place of Antàlo to cut all trees and bushes in every direction, on the road to the Amhara, for the Ras to pass to war with Guxo, upon hearing which Mr. Coffin started the next day to join the Ras.

Guxo, we were informed, had forced the king Itsa Guarlu to call him Ras, and to deliver up his wife, whom he took to himself; he likewise sent a messenger to the Ras, but nobody knew with what intent, as the Ras kept the communication to himself. The drum was again beat on the following Wednesday, to prepare for war against the new Ras, Woldi Michael, or Guxo—Woldi Michael being his christian name—who had determined to besiege Samen, and advance to Tigré, the Tigré rebels forming his Fit-aurari, or van army.

November 29th. The Ras arrived at Antàlo, and gave orders to his people to be ready on the

following Tuesday; but news being brought the next day, that the former report was untrue, and that Guxo had not yet started from Gondar, having merely sent his head general, Ackly Marro, to war against Ras Guebra, of Samen, the Ras thought it useless to march in person, but sent some trusty chiefs to join Ras Guebra, delaying his own expedition till Guxo should appear himself in the field.

Ras Welled Selassé had previously sent four messengers to Guxo, to inform him that it was neither he nor his father before him that could conquer Tigré, and therefore recommended him not to give himself the trouble of crossing the Tacazzé, but to send him word, by the first messenger, on what plain he would like best to meet him, adding that, as Guxo had a great body of horse, a large plain would probably suit him best. The second messenger he directed to bring him word of his first day's march; the third of his second; and the fourth of his third. Orders were then given, in every part of the country, to clothe their servants, feed their horses and mules, and prepare for war against the return of the messengers.

December 6th. Ito Woldi Raphael, the son of Ito Sevato, younger brother to Ras Welled Selassé, together with the chief of the Bora,

Safarling Guebra Abba, and Ito Woldi Samuel of Salora, marched to the frontiers of Guxo's dominions, and there encamped till the return of the Ras's messengers.

The messengers returned with a conciliatory answer, but, in the mean time, Waxum* Comfu of the Argare Lasta having marched with his army, by the Ras's orders, to Guido, a country in Guxo's dominions, was attacked by an army of about five thousand of Guxo's horse, whom he defeated in the plain of Ardisart, commonly called Ferasenaiyer Medah, or horseman's plain, after which he burnt all their towns and villages, and brought off what cattle he could find, amounting to five thousand bullocks, and a great number of horses, mules, sheep, and goats: with these came a great number of prisoners, chiefly villagers, who did not carry arms, and who reported that a great number of men were killed by Waxum Comfu's musketry, there not being one musket with this detachment of Guxo's army.

This news, brought to the Ras on the 19th of December, at Antàlo, gave him great joy. Guxo had formerly been on terms of great friendship with the Gusmarsh Gudlu, of Walkayt; after the death of the latter, Walkayt was governed by

* Waxum is an ancient title of the Chiefs.

his son, the Gusmarsh Salada, a man who is reckoned to be the strongest person in Abyssinia; and it is reported, that when he was in an ill humour with his horse, he could, with one blow upon the head, kill the animal. I have been told that he has often done this when dissatisfied with his horse's temper, but I never saw it, although I was a particular friend of his, when he was with the Ras Welled Selassé, in 1808. He was about six feet high, and the stoutest man I ever saw. This country was afterwards taken from him by his Blitingatore, Woldi Comfu, who took upon himself his master's title of Gusmarsh, and governed all Walkayt; while the Gusmarsh Salada was obliged to fly to the Ras and others for support. Ito Woldi Gabriel, who had a great district in Walkayt, under Salada, also fled to Guxo, with whom he got so much in favour, that he gave him his daughter, and sent an army with him, from Gondar, to reduce Walkayt.

The army was first put under command of Woldi Gabriel, two-thirds of which were Galla, as most of Guxo's horsemen are, he himself, indeed, being a Galla born. Before this army left Gondar, Guxo gave his son-in-law the title of Gusmarsh of all Walkayt, from the borders of the Shangalla to the Tacazzé.

In December, 1810, Woldi Gabriel advanced to the borders of Walkayt, where he was met by Woldi Comfu's troops, commanded by his brother, on the plain of Assader; when a very hard battle was fought, which ended in the death of the Gusmarsh Woldi Gabriel, Guxo's son-in-law, and with the loss of fifteen hundred Galla horsemen; the remainder returned to Gondar. This battle lessened Guxo's pride, Woldi Comfu having sent him word, that though he was only a friend and servant of the Ras, yet even he did not think it worth his while to meet the army sent by Guxo, because he did not head it himself. This intelligence greatly satisfied Ras Welled Selassé.

December 26th. News was spread in Antàlo by the Shoa *cofla*, that some strange white man was advancing from Shoa to Tigré, and, as I had formerly received a letter from the Company's agent at Mocha, concerning Mr. Mungo Park, who entered Africa to the westward, I was led to believe that the traveller might prove to be that gentleman; for which reason, I asked the Ras for permission to go in search of him. This he at first granted, but, news being brought that Gojee and Liban had fought and that the latter was defeated, I was not allowed to go; as the Ras told me there was no other road

through their country, excepting that which joined to Wosen Segued's of Efat, and Gojee being at variance with Tigré, no *cofla*, or individual, would be able to travel without being murdered by him, if it proved true that he had conquered Liban.

In February, 1809, Gojee had taken the usual barbarous trophies from all the Tigré *coflas*, and had plundered them of their property, slaves, &c. to revenge himself for the blood shed by Tigré in 1807; and, to provoke Ras Welled Selassé, he had chosen out twelve of the Antàlo people, on account of that place being the Ras's residence, and took the eyes out of eleven of them; from the twelfth he took out only one eye, and then, tying them in a string together, left the man with one eye to conduct the others to their camp, where nearly all died. This is a trifling instance of Gojee's barbarity, of which I have heard examples too horrid to relate.

January 14th, 1811. The Ras's messenger returned from the Gusmarsh Liban, who said the news that Gojee's messenger reported was not true, as Liban had never had any engagement at all with Gojee; though, after plundering his country and returning to his own, Gojee had followed him, and cut off some horse, and taken Liban's tent, which was a long way in the

rear of the army, that chief never suspecting he would dare to follow him. On the arrival of this news, I had some hopes of fulfilling my intention of going to Shoa.

January 20th. Guebra Guro came in, as he had done formerly, to the Ras, with one of his rebel brothers, with stones upon their necks; when they were forgiven as before. But the Ras refused to receive Subegadis, who wished also to have made it up; but, having the blood of so many chiefs upon him, "How is it possible," said the Ras, "for him to remain about me in safety, even if I were to forgive him?"

February 1st. The Ras came to Chelicut, with an intention of meeting Ras Ilo's brother, Palambarus Woldi Toclu, but he did not arrive until the 4th. The same day, a very unpleasant circumstance occurred to me and Mr. Coffin. The old Copti Gorgis*, who, it seems, was dissatisfied with the treatment he had received from the Company's agent at Mocha, forged a letter in Arabic, in the name of the governor of Ayth, near Amphila, on the coast; addressed to all the chief-priests, and advising them to be upon their guard, as the Feringees, or English, were ex-

* Gorgis, an old Copti, the only one remaining of the train of the Egyptian Abuna.

pected to land at Amphila, with an intention to march to the Ras Welled Selassé's territories, and make war upon the Christians in Abyssinia; and, if they did not put to death Pearce and Coffin, who had got acquainted with the roads throughout the country, it might be of very serious consequence to them. This letter was sealed with a false stamp, in the name of the governor of Ayth. All this being told us by Gorgis' servant, who had been with him to Mocha, I went immediately to the Ras and told him what I had heard, to which he replied, "I am not surprised at Gorgis, as he once was found in league with some others, in the time of Gusmarsh Woldi Gabriel, Ras Michael's son, and was caught filling a hole with powder under the sofa I slept upon, for which he was to have been paid by the Gusmarsh Woldi Gabriel, had it succeeded; but it was not God's will it should be so. I chained Gorgis," he went on to say, "with an intention to punish him, but, at last, I sent him about his business, as I did not like to take away his life on my own account, but left him to the judgment of God." He added, "Do not be alarmed at such news as this, for no one shall hurt you while I am living."

February 8th. Palambarus Woldi Toclu begged the Ras to let him see me fire at a cloth spread

upon the mountain above Chelicut, about three quarters of a mile distant, with the cannon before mentioned; and it greatly astonished him when he saw the shot hit so true.

February 9th. This chief returned to his own country, and the Ras, on his taking leave, made him a present of two handsome matchlocks, and a velvet *deno*, a dress made up in the fashion of the sheepskin usually worn. It was my intention to have gone along with him as far as Sallabella, his country, and to try and penetrate thence to Shoa; but difficulties were thrown in the way by the Ras, and I was myself so ill with a sore throat at the time, that it could not well have been attempted.

February 17th. I heard from a friend, who had just come from Walkayt, that a white man had arrived there from Tombuctoo by the way of Ras-el-feel, and I now was happy to think that I had not gone with the Palambarus, as I had intended, for the purpose of giving all the assistance in my power to this traveller; I immediately, however, sent off a trusty servant, with a letter directed to Mr. Mungo Park, British traveller in Africa; begging him, in case of his arrival in Walkayt, to let me know by the bearer, and I would immediately join him there, and do him all the service in my power.

The next day, I heard from a very respectable merchant, of the Walkayt *cofla*, that, when he left that district, a white man was expected there, who had been a prisoner three years among the Shangalla, and had been made to carry wood, water, &c., like a slave; but who, by good fortune, had at length made his escape. I took this merchant with me to the Ras, acquainting him with what had been told me, and mentioned that I suspected it was my countryman, in great distress. The good old gentleman immediately sent a messenger to the Gusmati Woldi Comfu, desiring him, if any white man should arrive in his country, to clothe him, and feed him well for some time, and then give him mules, servants, &c., and forward him to Antàlo.

March 4th. My servant came back without the least intelligence of the traveller, which made me think that, though it might be true that he had been seen as near Walkayt as Ras-el-feel, he had gone on to Suakin on the coast.

March 8th. A messenger from Guxo came to the Ras, with offers of conciliation. He was answered by the Ras, that if he would put all the priests, who had formerly been left at the head of different Amhara churches by the Abuna, in their proper stations, and let them follow the religion they professed, and not make war with his

friends, Ras Ilo and Liban, he would always continue on amicable terms with him.

March 18th. Liban's messenger arrived at Gibba, where the Ras was keeping his fast, with intelligence that Liban was within one day's march of Deverertavor, Guxo's capital, that his Fit-aurari had fought with Guxo's Fit-aurari, though without gaining any decided advantage, and inviting the Ras, if he were his friend, to come by Lasta to his assistance. The Ras did not, however, think proper to march himself, after the messenger he had sent to Guxo, but detached Waxum Comfu and Bashaw Wolockedan, with a strong army to assist Liban, telling him, if he were defeated, he would then march himself; and orders were given accordingly, throughout the country, to be in readiness.

March 25th. Intelligence was brought that Liban's Fit-aurari had beaten Guxo, and driven him back to his camp, and that Liban had burnt and destroyed all Daunt, Wadler, and Begemder. The old Ras was far from pleased on hearing of his friend's burning Christian churches; Guxo, it was said, had not offered to march against Liban, but had let him advance as near as possible, that he might not easily make his escape. The Ras now greatly wished to proceed, but his chiefs persuaded him to the contrary.

On the 29th, the messenger, who was sent by the Ras to Walkayt, arrived without hearing any tidings of the white man, which confirmed me still more in my own opinion, that he had gone down to Suakin or some other place upon the coast. The white man seen in Shoa, I afterwards heard, was a Turkish merchant, who had gone up thither with goods from Zela.

March 30th. Guebra Guro came to my house to discourse with me and Mr. Coffin concerning the usage he had received from the Ras, and told us, that, if the Ras should gō to war with the Amhara, his brother Subegadis would take possession of all Tigré during his absence. Two days after, I and Mr. Coffin went to the Ras, thinking it best to acquaint him with Guebra Guro's visit and intelligence, for fear of his hearing of the circumstance from some other quarter. When I told him what had passed, he flew into a passion, saying, "What business had you in his company?" and added, "go you with them." I told him the country I belonged to was governed by a king, and that I would return to it rather than join his rebels, as he told me; saying which, I went away, and immediately afterwards sent to his house the horse he had given me, and prepared for our departure. Our friend Baharnegash Yasous happening to be with the Ras at the time, and hearing

what he said, told him that he was in the wrong. Chellica Comfu also told the Ras that I had been like a slave to him for nearly six years, and said, "How can you be angry with him for having committed no fault?" Others also spoke in my behalf. The next morning he sent for me, but I refused to go, until the Baharnegash of Chellica Comfu came and persuaded me; when I came before him, he asked me "What was the reason of my returning my horse?" I told him that "I had been better than five years as a slave to him, and during three wars, and long encampments in his service, had sometimes been almost as naked as I was born, and when no plunder was to be gained had often nearly died with hunger; and that in return for my services he had told me to go and join his rebellious subjects, which I would never do, though, if he would grant me leave, I would return to my native country." In answer he said, "I only told you so from being out of temper with something else, and I am in the wrong, you have always behaved as you say;" and then he gave me and Mr. Coffin a *bruly* of brandy, and the matter was made up. On the same day, he gave me the large piece of cultivated land, called Wogarte, with all *arristies*, or ploughmen, with their ploughs and oxen, fifteen in number. The produce of this land was merely for my cattle and

servants, and my standing allowance went on as usual.

April 4th. News was brought, that Liban had burnt a church belonging to Guxo, called Tuckerlie Yasous, which enraged Guxo so much, that he marched himself to the field and drove Liban before him, burning all the towns and villages in Daunt, Wadler, and Damot. This news much displeased the Ras, who determined to march at the latter end of the month.

April 9th. A present arrived for the Ras, from Wosen Segued, king of Shoa, of seven very beautiful horses, for his own riding, and three mules, one of which he had received from the Gusmarsh Guxo, and which he sent expressly to the Ras, to shew him that he had more regard for him than for Guxo; there were also six young boys and six young girls, slaves, who accompanied the present, which was graciously received.

On the following day, he gave me the choice of one of the six girls for myself, and the rest he presented to his women. With these presents came a pair of red leather shoes, for the Ras, from the king of Shoa, which is considered as a token of great affection.

Although the Ras had determined to march upon the 29th of this month, yet, attempting to start, the priests came from all parts of the coun-

try, and assembled before him at Antàlo, assuring him that it was not a season for war, and that he must not go until the rains were over in September, which grieved him very much, as Guxo had totally defeated Liban, and taken Barbar his capital. Liban fled across the river Bashilo, which often begins about the latter end of May to overflow, on account of the early rains, in Wochale, where he remained safe from Guxo, expecting that the Ras would march to his assistance.

April 30th. A very hard battle was fought by Baharnegash Subhart and Kantiva Sasinas, against Shum Woldi, of Zervan Bure, and the sons of Kantiva Amon, of Arli and Fellou. Shum Woldi was killed by a soldier belonging to Sasinas; although Shum Woldi was a very old man, he killed three with his spear before he fell, one of whom was brother to Sasinas: After he had fallen, and Sasinas was told the news, he rode up to the old man and cut his throat, which greatly disgraced him, as every one was of opinion that it proved him a coward. Fifteen chiefs were killed upon Shum Woldi's side, with seventy men; and on Baharnegash Subhart's side, three chiefs and twenty-four soldiers. The Ras was much grieved at this affair, but, as he had given them leave to fight it out, he could say nothing

to either party. This disturbance made the road down to Massowa very unsafe for some time; the relations of Shum Woldi, together with his son, having raised about seventy thousand men more than before, only waited for the Ras's permission to be revenged upon the others for the barbarity of Sasinas. Nebrid, who left Tigré as a rebel, died in Wadler, on his return with Guxo's army from the country of Liban to Gondar, and was buried in the church of Abbagarva, April 1811. There was great crying for him throughout all Tigré; the Ras himself joined in the ceremony for two days, and gave one hundred pieces of cloth, equal to one hundred dollars, to the priests of the Trinity Church, at Chelicut, and one hundred to the priests of Axum; offering up some prayers for the deceased, which they call *fettart*. These priests always get well paid when any great man dies, and from the poor they get part of what property they may leave behind; on which account I really believe that they often pray for people to die.

May 4th. I and Mr. Coffin went to the Ras, to inform him that we were continually threatened by some of his head-priests, and that we hoped he would allow us to go back to our own country. This was not done through fear of what they could do to us, but to see if it were possible to

get some of them turned out of their places, but it was to no purpose. He said, " You cannot go at present, but no one shall hurt you while I am alive. The two guns your king sent make all my enemies fear me, both upon the plains and upon the Ambas; and, if I were to let you go, who would know how to use them ?"

May 6th. The country of Agamé, belonging to Subegadis, was given to his brother Sardie, whom he had so long confined, but who fortunately made his escape by bribing the man to whom he was chained.

May 12th. Subegadis came into the camp of Salafe Tusfu Mariam by night. He was one of the Ras's chiefs, sent through the different settlements as far as Degan to gather in the Ras's yearly income, and, upon his return through the country of Agamé, under the mountain of Ambaarra, belonging to Subegadis, he sent away a great many of his men, with the Ras's money; upon which Subegadis, seeing that he had but a small force left, came upon him in the night, and made a great slaughter, Tusfu Mariam himself being also killed, which grieved the Ras very much, although he blamed him for his misconduct.

May 29th. Guxo arrived in Deverertavor, after driving Liban one day's march beyond the Ba-

shilo, and gave his country to his own chiefs, Anderwar Siddisto and Buro Gala, who command a very large body of cavalry, and are chiefs of considerable importance. Guxo is supposed at this time to have more power than ever Itsa Tecla Gorgis possessed, and, on this occasion, he took with him to the field twenty-eight thousand horse, besides his foot, and a few matchlocks; yet, though his army was so numerous, he was always in dread of Ras Welled Selassé's musketry, and at this time, sent his chief priest Allicar Redan, and his Balermal, Ito Coularlit, to the Ras, to intreat him to be friends with him, and make it up. The Ras refused his request, and said, that if he did not release the Gusmarsh Christy Zonde, and the Cannasmash Wardic, of Gojam and Damot, and give them back their country, he would, when the rains in September were over, let him know who Ras Welled Selassé was.

In the middle of June, Liban found an opportunity of crossing the Bashilo without much loss, and, returning to his own country, fought with Guxo's two generals, and, after great slaughter, took Anderwar Siddisto prisoner, and drove Buro Gala to a high and strong mountain, called Cugso Amba. Guxo could not venture to march to their assistance, as Hilier Mariam, Ras Guebra's

son, had burned and destroyed all Wogara, and advanced to within a short day's march of Gondar. Ras Welled Selassé's subjects, not being willing to go to war with the Amhara, as the locust appeared in all parts of Tigré in the month of July, the campaign was deferred, and Liban and all Guxo's enemies seeing this, were glad to make terms with Guxo, and to be friends, though more from fear than any motives of good-will.

In the latter end of July, Guxo sent two of his chief secretaries to the Ras, declaring that he would agree to any thing he proposed, except the release of Christy Zonde and the Cannasmash Wardic, who, were they once set free, would soon overthrow his country. With this the Ras appeared satisfied, and sent with the messengers Dofter Aster, one of the most learned men in the country, to agree about the expence of bringing the Abuna into the country; but Guxo said, that he would not agree to any thing of that kind until he should know the truth of the Ras's heart, because, if the Abuna were to come from Egypt, it would be the occasion of Ras Welled Selassé's accompanying him to Gondar.

August 18th. Guebra Guro was chained by the Ras's orders and sent to Alajjay, a very strong mountain in Wojjerat, where all chiefs who had offended were confined, in general for life before

the Ras's time; but he, being the most merciful governor ever known in Abyssinia, never keeps even the greatest of his enemies long in confinement, and never puts them to death except for murder; while his predecessors have been known to burn alive or cut off the limbs of those who have fallen under their displeasure for the slightest offences. Gojee is the most cruel chief that ever was known, not even excepting Ras Michael, who, though very severe to chiefs under him, if they disobeyed, yet was always kind to the poor, and very liberal in giving away his money, while Ras Welled Selassé, though a man of the tenderest feelings, is the greatest miser I believe that ever existed. The poor get nothing from him but the yearly offerings, which all Christians, that is to say, Christian chiefs, are bound to bestow by the laws of their religion; nevertheless he is a great favourite with the poor, as he does them justice when wronged by the rich or powerful.

September 13th. The Gusmati Ischias and two of Nebrid Aram's sons, who had been among the Tigré rebels, came from the Amhara, with stones about their necks, to ask forgiveness, at Mucculla, where the Ras was keeping the yearly holyday. The Ras, upon seeing the Gusmati, rose from his sofa, and kissed him, saying,

"Although it is far from the first time you have rebelled against me, yet I forgive you from my heart," and immediately gave orders that the Gusmati Ischias's districts should be returned to him, while to the sons of Nebrid Aram, Ito Woldi Michael, and Ito Melker, he gave half what they had formerly possessed.

The small-pox at this time committed such ravages throughout the country, that all thoughts of war were abandoned. As the malady increased, it became more like a plague than the small-pox, and in a great many towns and villages the people lost all their children, and numbers of grown-up persons, who had not had the disease before, died also. The only mode by which they suppose the complaint can be alleviated is to keep themselves from the air as much as possible, and let nobody see them who has been out of doors, or in the sunshine; they also tie up all cocks, he-cats, and other male animals, that chance to be about their houses, from the strange notion, that were they to associate at that time with their females, it would endanger the lives, or at any rate increase the sufferings, of those afflicted with the complaint*. For a similar reason, during all kinds of sickness, indeed, they will not allow a

* The Abyssinians in general lay their patients afflicted with small-pox on wood-ashes, or river-sand.

friend to enter the house where the patient lies; and they never wash themselves or their clothing when ill, being the dirtiest people in the world at these times, though, when in health, they are remarkably cleanly in their persons. I used continually to find fault with them for these superstitious and unhealthy practices, but to no purpose; though, for the sake of example, when my own people, eleven in number, were afflicted with the small-pox, I put them all together into a separate and clean house, and every morning and evening turned them out into the air, and made them wash themselves, though much against their inclinations. This practice brought upon me continual quarrels with my neighbours, though nobody dared interfere, as I told them what I did was for their own benefit, and to prevent their dying like dogs; and fortunately it was the will of God that they all got well in a short time.

At Axum, the mortality among the people was so great, as to occasion the loss of the cattle also, there not being a man or boy left in some families to open their pens and turn them out to grass. Thirty cows were found dead in one fold. At Adowa, the ravages of the disease were not so severe, as a great number of its inhabitants had previously had the disorder the last time it appeared amongst them; but all the other places in

Amhara, Tigré, Enderta, and the adjoining districts, Samen, Lasta, Begemder, Gondar, and Gojam, shared the same fate. The locust devoured the corn to the east of the Tacazzé*, and the small-pox carried off the people in all quarters, so that a great part of the country was left in a state of complete desolation.

* The locust is never known to get beyond the mountains of Samen.

CHAPTER II.

Destruction of the town of Bolento by the Galla—Government and manners of the Galla—Mr. Coffin's departure for Mocha—Present from the King of Shoa to the Ras—The Small-pox—Death of Ito Yasous, the King's brother, and his sister, Ożoro Mantwaub, wife of the Ras—Affliction of the Ras—Funeral of the Ozoro—Movements of Guxo—The Ras takes to wife a daughter of the King Itsa Tecla Gorgis—Battle between two chiefs at Antàlo—Submission of Subegadis to the Ras—Plans of Ras Guebra and Guxo—Locusts—Famine—Itsa Bede Mariam, formerly king, visits Antàlo—Insecurity of property—Reigning kings of Abyssinia—The Ras assembles his army—Defeat of Hilier Mariam by the Tigré army—Presents to messengers of good tidings—Insurrection of Subegadis—Release of Guebra Guro.

SEPTEMBER 17th. The Ras reviewed his troops at Antàlo. November 12th, he arrived at Chelicut from Mucculla, and the next day marched for Bolento, the frontier of the Galla, where we arrived in three days, and to our surprise found it totally in ruins, although, when I saw it, four years ago, it was the strongest place of defence in all Abyssinia. Welled Shabo, king of the Assubo pagan Galla, had come with his army in the night, and succeeded in getting into the town, by a small breach in the wall, which had fallen down during the heavy rains. In storming the place, the Galla killed three hundred and seventy-

five people, and drove, it is said, upwards of two thousand men, women, and children, over its walls, where many were dashed to pieces. There is not a place, I believe, round all the mountain of Bolento, less than thirty yards steep, except where the Galla found means to enter, the rest of the wall being in good repair, the front gateway having double walls, and within it flat-topped houses, upon which the people got to defend the gate, when attacked by an enemy. On the tops of the houses was a wall parapet about three feet thick, with holes made in it for firing matchlocks through, which no Galla will ever face. The Ras stopped until he had repaired the wall, and was visited continually by the different Galla chiefs in the neighbourhood, who brought him, as presents, *sangas* and other cattle, and he in return gave them clothes and silver ornaments for their arms and heads.

From the mountain of Bolento you can see the Galla walking in the capital of Assubo. You can also see Carra, another large town, at a great distance. Assubo, Carra, and Hiyer, are the three largest towns of the Assubo Galla. I was in Hiyer, on our return from Edjow, in 1807, when we stopped three days; our camp was at some distance, but the Ras received an invitation from Welled Shabo to see the town, and I went with

him. Like most of the towns in Abyssinia, it has no walls, but stands in the plain, whereas the Abyssinians in general build upon heights.

Welled Shabo is still alive, and often comes to see the Ras, though he is no longer king. The Assubo Galla elect their king for seven years only, which office is confined to the offspring of an ancient family. Kecty was the father of Shabo, and, after Kecty had been king seven years, his brother Bolento was made king, from whom the mountain of Bolento took its name, as he first fortified the place; but it was afterwards taken from him by the Christians. After Bolento came Shabo; Welled Shabo Combally, brother to Shabo, was the next king, but, dying a short time before his time was out, his son, Welled Combally, the present king, was elected.

I saw Shabo and his son, with several other principal Galla, sitting down to feast upon a fine fat *sanga*. As soon as the animal was killed, the blood was caught hot in horns, the first being given to Shabo, the second to his son, and so on in rotation as long as it lasted, and they seemed to relish it as much as my own countrymen would a draught of porter or wine. Although they in general drink the blood, they always broil the meat a little, and upbraid the Christians

for eating it raw, like dogs. They have no regular wives, except such as belong to the family of their kings, who always take a relative to wife. They may have as many concubines as they please, but the children by the latter cannot be elected kings, or succeed to any of their father's property. All others do as they think proper, and relationship forms no objection where they take a liking.

December 25th. The Ras returned to Betmariah, in Wojjerat, where we kept our Christmas-day, and on the 27th proceeded to Gurref Deddeck.

January 1st, 1812. We went to Antàlo, where the Ras reviewed his Enderta, Wojjerat, Temben, and Giralta troops.

On the 14th, Mr. Coffin took leave of the Ras at Antàlo, and on the 16th left Chelicut for Mocha. The Ras would not let him go, before he had made me swear to be bound for his returning in the space of three months. He gave Mr. Coffin, for himself, fifty pieces of common cloth, two fine cloths for his own dress, and a fine *gersillah** skin dress, the latter worth two *wakeahs* of gold. He also gave him thirty *wakeahs* of gold, to deliver to Captain Rud-

* The *gersillah* is a fine black animal of the leopard kind.

land; and I likewise sent by him, as a present to Captain Rudland, a tame lion, which I had taught to follow me like a dog, and two civet-cats.

January 24th. Messengers from Wosen Segued, king of Shoa, arrived with a present of ten horses, two mules, and twelve slaves, to the Ras, which present was kindly accepted, as at other times, with an inclination of the head. The small-pox still raged like a plague throughout the country.

February 18th. Ito Yasous died of this malady, and his sister Ozoro Mantwaub on the 16th; they were brother and sister to the present king, Itsa Guarlu, now in Gondar, who is lineally descended from the late king, Itsa Ischias, who was dethroned by Guxo. Ito Yasous was an intimate acquaintance of Mr. Salt's. The Ozoro's death grieved every one who knew her, as she was one of the most charitable persons in Abyssinia, and was the favourite wife of the Ras, who sat close by her when she died. As she breathed her last, he drew his *shuttle*, or knife, to stab himself, but I caught hold of his arm and took it away, and with the help of some slaves prevented him from committing so dreadful an act. He lay afterwards for some time senseless on the ground, but, at last, when water was thrown upon him, he came to himself, though, for some

days, he appeared quite inconsolable, and ate nothing, saying continually "Is God angry with me?" A great many of his relations died at the same time, and throughout the country nothing was heard but lamentations for their loss.

Ozoro Mantwaub and Ito Yasous were buried at Chelicut, and a house was built over their grave. The grave was first dug, and then a large coffin or trough, made out of the trunk of a large darro-tree, formerly serving as doors to the Ras's house, was placed in it*. I myself carried Ozoro Mantwaub in my arms from the church to the grave; she was sewed up in a fine white Indian cloth, and over that was tied the skin upon which she died: they call it a *neet*, and it is formed either of a cow's or goat's hide. The whole of the people, from the king to the town-cast, sleep with their bodies bare upon it, though they have a carpet beneath. Nobody, except her priest, myself, her women-servants, and the eunuchs who used to attend upon her, and of whom she had a great number, was allowed to see her; but the Ras, from the confidence he reposed in me, always allowed me to eat with him and the Ozoro, telling her, at the same time,

* It is a common practice to take doors to make a coffin for great persons at their death, if they have wooden ones, for, in general, they are of cane.

I was welcome to visit her at her own meals, and, if I did not come, she might, if she thought proper, send for me. This was certainly a great mark of distinction, as his dearest friend or relation was not allowed such a liberty*.

Guxo, being alarmed at the prevalence of the small-pox, fled to Gojam, but, finding it raged in that country, he went to Mettreah, an island on the Lake Tzana, where he resided until the disorder began to abate. There are several islands on this lake upon which he has houses, namely one at Mettreah, where his brother is buried, and another on Rama, where his mother is interred; but his favourite house stands upon the small island Carretta Wolletta. The disorder, however, having by this time spread from Dembea to that island, induced him to retire to Mettreah. As soon as the complaint had subsided, and he could venture to Gondar, Deverertavor, and Leuo, he sent his head general, Ackly Marro, to make war upon Ras Guebra; but Ackly Marro, finding that Welled Selassé was previously warned

* It is singular that Mr. Salt was not allowed this favour, as he expressly states that, owing to the extreme jealousy of the Ras in these matters, he never, except once, and then by a stratagem of the lady's, obtained a sight even of her person. Perhaps the Ras might consider the rank of Mr. Salt as too nearly approaching his own to admit of that degree of familiarity in which he thought an inferior might be safely indulged.—*Editor*.

of Guxo's intention, and had dispatched five hundred musket-men to Ras Guebra's assistance, with Shum Temben Aversaw, the eldest son of Ito Manassey, sent word back to his master Guxo, that the muskets of Tigré were so numerous that it would be folly to attack Samen, were he even to march in person; the country being so mountainous and so disadvantageous for cavalry.

At this time, Cannasmash Hilier Mariam, Ras Guebra's son, had taken Walkayt, and driven Woldi Comfu to Waldubba, which made Guxo wish to come to terms with Ras Guebra. Accordingly, it was agreed that the king Itsa Tecla Gorgis should settle the dispute that had arisen between them. After peace was established, Guxo offered his daughter in marriage to Ras Guebra's son, Hilier Mariam, with the view of detaching him from the interest of Ras Welled Selassé; who, when he learned the intelligence, ordered his troops to return from Ras Guebra's dominions.

At this time, the Ras, not appearing inclined for war, spent his time chiefly in going from Antàlo to Chelicut, Mucculla, &c., for his amusement. He seemed to have quite forgotten his favourite Ozoro Mantwaub, as, about this period, he agreed, though upwards of seventy, to take to

wife Itsa Tecla Gorgis' daughter, Ozoro Sean; who accordingly on July 11th arrived with a great company, at midnight, at Fellegdarro, where the Ras had been employed, during the month of June, in building a house for her reception. She was about thirteen years of age, of a very black complexion, like her father, but had very pretty features. The marriage was consummated the same night; the lady remained at Fellegdarro until the 3d of August, when he sent for her to Chelicut, but did not, for some time, establish her in the house occupied by his late wife.

August 8th. The Gusmarsh Tuimmerhu, of Amhara, arrived at Chelicut; he was governor of a great district on the banks of the Bashilo; but, his subjects rebelling against him, he fled to the Ras for succour, as neither Liban nor Gojee was on friendly terms with him, though his country nearly joined theirs. When he arrived at Antàlo, he presented to the Ras the horse he rode upon, which was well received.

August 29th. The Ras left Chelicut for Mucculla, where he kept his new year's day, (Kudus Yohannis) and he returned to Chelicut on the 14th of September; on the 16th he went to Antàlo to review his troops, according to the

84494

yearly custom, and to place and replace his chiefs as he thought proper.

September 17th. Palambarus Guebra Amlac, who rebelled with Nebrid Aram, came from Guxo's army with a stone upon his neck, was forgiven, and had part of his district returned to him.

September 24th. Safarling Guebra Abba quarrelled with Ito Ilo, in the market-place of Antàlo, and brought on a battle in which Guebra Abba had thirty-four men, and his mule under him, killed outright, and his two sons and several men wounded. Ilo, being a son of Balgadder Woldi Hannes, a near relation to the Ras, was assisted by all Enderta, who together overpowered Guebra Abba, although the latter never quitted his ground. Ilo had five men killed and was himself wounded. The Ras was very much concerned at this rencounter, and several times sent orders to the combatants to desist and he would render justice to both sides, but to no purpose, until night parted them.

Guebra Abba was one of the hardest-fighting chiefs the Ras ever had, and always kept the Hazorta Galla from intruding on the districts which he commanded, and which adjoined theirs. Indeed, he would have beaten all Enderta, had the dispute not happened in the town, where the

latter could get shelter behind walls and houses. The Ras was very sorry that Guebra was overpowered, for he had ever been a faithful servant to him, and he took from all those who came to Ilo's assistance half their districts, which he gave to Guebra Abba as a recompence. I told the Ras that this practice would not do in our country, for such quarrels would be deemed rebellion, and every one concerned in such an outrage would be put to death by the king's troops. Ito Middin, a great favourite with the Ras, was the chief assistant to Ilo; and was proved to have shot five men himself belonging to Guebra Abba, for which Guebra Abba demanded justice, according to their book of laws, which is kept in all their head churches; upon which Middin took sanctuary in the Ras's church at Chelicut.

October 13th. Ito Subegadis, the greatest rebel in Abyssinia, came to the Ras, with a stone upon his neck, and, although the Ras had formerly refused to receive him, yet, on seeing him personally, he forgave him. His brother Guebra Guro was still closely imprisoned in chains, and Subegadis thought, that, by submitting to the Ras, he should very likely obtain the release of his brother from confinement, but the Ras kept him close up on Alajjay. About this time, two of

Guebra Guro's servants were caught buying charms, to loosen the irons from their master's hands and legs, from an old Mahomedan fakir*, and were ordered by the Ras to be barbarously flogged three times round the market-place of Antàlo; but the Mahomedan he only called a superstitious old fool, and sent him about his business.

November 1st. Three Balermals, people of great distinction, arrived from Ras Guebra, to inform the Ras that Guxo was upon his march to Inchetkaub, his capital, and was encamped at Mariam Wor; telling the Ras, at the same time, that their master had no other friend upon whom he could rely for assistance against his enemies; and praying that he would march, as soon as possible, by way of Lasta and Begemder, and throw himself in the rear of Guxo's army. The Ras, on hearing this proposal, suspected Ras Guebra of treachery, and insisted therefore, in his reply, on going through Samen; which made Ras Guebra send again, saying that Guxo and he had settled all their disputes. A few days after Guxo's head secretary came, in the name of his master; and, bowing at the Ras's feet, said that

* Many, both Mahomedans and Christians, get their living by writing charms.

he had never given the least offence to Ras Guebra, or any other ally of his; nor had he marched from Gondar to Mariam Wor, as Ras Guebra had reported, and that one day or other he would know all.

In fact, he soon did become acquainted with the real state of things; for, a short time afterwards, a favourite priest of Guxo's came over, and disclosed to the Ras the whole affair; when it appeared that, notwithstanding the kind treatment Ras Guebra had always received from Ras Welled Selassé, who had three times forgiven his rebellious practices, he still persisted in his treacherous conduct. On this occasion, it seems, he and Guxo had agreed that Ras Welled Selassé should be persuaded to march, round by Lasta and Begemder, against Guxo; and that, after passing through Lasta, Ras Guebra, and his son Cannasmash Hilier Mariam, who had got complete possession of Walkayt, should both go down to Tigré, and endeavour to seduce the remainder of the army left to guard that country; a scheme in which Ras Guebra hoped to succeed, from having, for some time previously, made alliance through marriages with many chiefs of Tigré, even with the consent of the Ras, who had never suspected his treachery. After these several plots had been accomplished, the united

forces were to march in the rear of the Ras's army, while Guxo was to retreat to the plains of Gojam, where they hoped, if the Ras followed, to be able to surround him. It was upon this agreement being sworn to by Guxo and Ras Guebra, that the former had sent his daughter to the Cannasmash Hilier Mariam, who was also bound by oath to be true to the league. With his daughter Guxo sent fifty horses and fifty mules, one thousand horned cattle, cows and bulls, fifty matchlocks, twenty-five Persian carpets, fifty slaves, fifty free female servants, with silver *merdah* (necklaces,) fifty swords, and five hundred *wakeahs* of gold, as the dowry of his daughter, to his new son-in-law.

Ras Guebra, to complete his plan, without any just cause, put in chains some of his own chiefs, for the purpose of raising money to make presents, and to bribe the chiefs of Tigré and the army, who were to be left by the Ras. Amongst others, he confined the head captain of his door, or gate-keeper, Ito Guebra Mariam, and took from him five hundred *wakeahs* of gold; a like sum from his Blitingatore Gabriott, and from several others. Bashaw Abdalla, who had been there three years chained with his sons, was stripped of every farthing of his property, and was still kept in confinement. These persons, so inhumanly treated,

sent messengers to Guxo, to tell him that their master, his friend, had for no cause whatever chained them and taken their property; and Guxo, knowing them to be always faithful servants to Ras Guebra, sent one of his chief Balermals to beg of Ras Guebra to pardon them; as, if they had even been guilty of a small fault, he ought to think of their former services. The latter returned for answer, by one of his Balermals, that they had been convicted of having continually sent messengers backward and forward to Ras Welled Selassé, and that they were enemies both to himself and Guxo; adding, "For this reason I will keep them in chains as long as they live." The same chiefs had recourse to the Ras for his interference; but Ras Guebra returned the same kind of answer to his messenger as he did to Guxo's, saying, they had been proved to have sent messengers to Guxo, and were enemies both of the Ras and himself.

On Guxo's finding that the Ras had become acquainted with the whole of their plot, and that consequently he did not intend to march, he sent word to Ras Ilo of Lasta, desiring him to cut all trees and bushes, and to make a clear road for him, as he intended to march through Lasta to Edjow, his father's country. Ras Ilo told him

that if he had any servants in Lasta they might clear the road for him, if not, to come and do it himself; which sharp rebuke did not much please him.

Soon after, Guxo's messenger to the Ras arrived at Chelicut, begging him not to be offended if he took possession of Edjow, as it belonged to him by inheritance from Gongula, Ras Alli, and Alligaz; and saying that, although Gojee was Ras Alligaz's own son, and he only Ras Alli's sister's son, still he thought he had most right to the country, he being a Christian, as well as his father and grandfather, and Gojee only a Mussulman, like the great-grandfather Gongula. The Ras said he would not agree to any such attempt, as Lasta, Ilow, and Edjow, were his allies; and ended by declaring that, if he offered to march to either of them, he would immediately attack him, and assist them, and for ever put an end to his power. The warmth with which the Ras took up this affair had the desired effect, and kept Guxo at home.

The locust this year committed great ravages, and a considerable part of the country was covered with them, so as to produce a partial famine, especially in Ammerseem, where several thousands died with hunger; fifty pieces of salt, equal at the time to one dollar and a

half, being given for one *incar*, which is about one English quart, of barley. Other districts were not quite so much distressed, as, for that price, you could buy one bushel in Enderta, and in Tigré three *karoos*, equal to three pecks, for one dollar; whereas, before the locust appeared, nine *gibbertas*, or bushels, might be bought for a dollar in the market of Adowa.

The Ras kept his Christmas at Chelicut, and, on the 3rd of January, 1813, went to Antàlo. On his road he mounted his favourite horse Bulla, and rode to the plain of Bellesart, where he brought his horsemen to a sham fight; the old gentleman firing and loading again, at full gallop, with English pistols, as well as I or Mr. Coffin could do; for, although upwards of seventy years of age, he rides as lightly and as carelessly as any young man in the country.

January 20th. Itsa Bede Mariam, formerly king, arrived at Antàlo, to beg of the Ras to forgive every thing that had happened, on the part of Ras Guebra, as the latter acknowledged he had done wrong. Itsa Bede was put upon the throne, by the Degusmati Gabriel, Ras Michael's son; the latter being killed by Ras Alli of Edjow, Bede Mariam was dethroned by him, after being king only seven months, since which time he remained with Ras Guebra, and

sometimes with Ras Welled Selassé, but, being a Roman Catholic, he agrees best with Ras Guebra, who is a follower of that religion. The Ras would not listen to his propositions, but said that if Ras Guebra would not withdraw his son from Walkayt, and deliver up the whole of the country belonging to Woldi Comfu, he would prove a worse enemy to him than ever he had been before.

January 29th. Bede Mariam left Antàlo, taking with him a great many Amhara, who wished to return to Gondar, their native town, having been a long time in Tigré without hearing of their children and friends. The people of Tigré are better treated by their governors than the Amhara; a poor man among the former can get some justice done him when wronged, but in Amhara or Gondar he dares not even wear a good cloth on his back for fear of being stripped by Guxo's and Ackly Marro's soldiers. A poor old faithful Amhara, who had been servant to Mr. Coffin for three years, said he wanted to go to Gondar to see his two sons and a daughter, whom he had left nine years before. Mr. Coffin gave him leave to depart, but wished him to buy a new cloth previously, that he might appear decent when he arrived at his native place; but he replied, the rags would suit him best; "for,"

he added, "if I have a new cloth on, some of Guxo's Galla will strip me, but, if I have a ragged one, they will leave it me, and that will be at least more decent than to go naked." He then set out on his journey, equipped as he wished, and in twelve days we heard of his arrival with his children. From Chelicut, he went to Saharte the first day; the second he crossed the Tacazzé; the third he reached Sugernet, in Samen; the fourth Inchetkaub, Ras Guebra's capital; and the fifth Mariam Wor, and Gondar; thus accomplishing the journey in five days, although he was, by his own account, seventy-eight years of age.

Although it has been a long time expected that Ras Welled Selassé would march to Gondar, and place Tecla Gorgis upon the throne, matters appear still as backward as ever; as he is persuaded to wait for the Abuna from Egypt and take him with him.

The kings now living in Abyssinia are as follow: Itsa Tecla Gorgis, in Waldubba; Itsa Ischias, in Gondar; Itsa Guarlu, on the throne in that city; Itsa Yonas, in Gojam; Itsa Yoas, in Gondar; Itsa Bede Mariam, in Samen.

They are all related to each other, and, as they boast, are descended from the true race of Menelect; but the kings of Abyssinia have so many

wives, from far and near, that it makes it difficult to determine to whom the crown should descend; and this point is generally decided more by might than by right.

Messengers continually came from Woldi Comfu; and his brother, Fit-aurari Suddal, arriving, made the old Ras come at length to a determination; and accordingly, on the 5th of February, the drum was beat to assemble the army, and be in readiness to march against Abbagarva on the 6th, when we marched from Antàlo to Esta, in Saharte, where the Ras meant to remain a few days, until his troops should be all collected, and then to proceed direct to Gondar, by way of Samen: but the priests, flocking from far and near, obliged him to lay aside his intention and return to Antàlo. Soon afterwards, the drum was again beat, for all Tigré to march under the command of Fit-aurari Guebra Amlac, to Walkayt, against Hilier Mariam, who had by this time become very powerful. The chiefs who went under the Fit-aurari, though higher in office, were Blitingatore Wosen, and Palambarus Toclu, the sons of Nebrid Aram, and the chiefs of Shiré, altogether forming a strong army.

February 20th. News was brought that Kantiva Sasinas and the sons of Baharnegash Subhart had been beaten by the sons of Shum Woldi of

Fellou; who had been joined by Arli and a powerful district, called Gella Hatchin, one of the seven Gellas. A great number had been killed on both sides, and the whole country of Sasinas and Subhart plundered of its cattle, but no villages were burnt. The Ras immediately sent for the chiefs on both sides, and, as they had fought without his leave, and appeared equally culpable, he made both parties pay an equal quantity of cattle, at the same time accepting five hundred cows from Arli and his allies, as a present out of their plunder.

March 19th. The joyful news reached the Ras that the Tigré army had defeated Hilier Mariam, and had taken his brother, Ito Batri, and Asgas Sedit, the chief of Arbarcholo, prisoners, besides his camp-equipage, his women, and a great number of horse; leaving four hundred dead upon the field of battle. Hilier Mariam had fought very bravely, but the Tigré muskets put his horse into confusion, which led to a general rout.

The Ras bestowed valuable presents upon the messengers: to the first, he gave a horse, spear, and shield, with a fine piece of muslin; and to each of the others a mule. Chellica Comfu, a friend of mine, had ordered his servant to visit me with the news; so I also was obliged to part

with a mule, it being a regular custom, all over Abyssinia, to give a handsome reward to the *messerach*, or bringer of good tidings, after the gaining of a battle, or on any other joyful event, such as the birth of a child, &c. On such occasions, the household servants of the great man plague their master until he consents to send them to his nearest friend, or kindred, knowing that they are sure to obtain a mule, a cloth, or some other article of value; shabby treatment on such an occasion being considered a mark of hostility. In like manner, when one chief sends a messenger to another upon any important business, if the latter does not present the messenger with something of value, he is considered as an enemy.

March 24th. News was brought that Subegadis had plundered all his brother Sardie's country, and had even marched into Arramat; the Ras immediately ordered Giralta, Tserra, Asmo, and Derra, to unite with Arramat against him. On the approach of his assailants, Subegadis marched gradually back to his own district, and they followed him to Adergraat, to which place it had been his object to entice them; where he gave them battle, and soon routed them in all directions, killing and taking a great many prisoners, and, among others, some of the Ras's relatives,

whom he would not release, till the Ras had sworn to give him half of Agamé, and release his brother, Guebra Guro, from confinement. The Ras, knowing from experience that it would be useless to march against him, and being aware that if he did it would be the means of destroying the districts of innocent people who had been long suffering from the ravages of the locust, at length, after some hesitation, consented; and Guebra Guro was accordingly released, after having remained eighteen months a prisoner, during which period he had learned to read the Psalms of David, though previously he could not tell one letter from another.

CHAPTER III.

The Ras marches against a Galla Chief—Surprise and Defeat of the Galla—Illness of Pearce—Justice of the Ras—Pearce becomes worse—Is visited secretly by the Ras—Pearce visits the Ras's brother, Ito Debbib—Stones with Arabic Inscriptions—Cry for the death of kings Yoas and Yonas—Lama—Rough Races—Review—Pearce is obliged by his malady to return home—His wife Tringo—Administration of the Sacrament—His recovery—Murder of the king of Shoa—Sacred Spring—Grand Review—The Sacred Snake—Military Manœuvres—Narrow Escape of Pearce and Coffin.

April 5th. Just as the Ras had arrived at Chelicut, from Antàlo, and was feasting with many chiefs, news was brought from the villages of Derger Aggerzeen, the frontiers of the Galla, that Kecty, a powerful chief of that nation, had crossed the plain below them on his way to Wassermer, for the purpose of cutting off the *arro*, or salt caravan.

The old Ras, on hearing this intelligence, never took another mouthful, but, jumping up immediately, called out the word, "*Churn!*" which signifies, "Saddle and be ready." I and Mr. Coffin instantly ran home, and were mounted and out, with some of our soldiers, as soon as the Ras himself; the rest of our men being absent on

leave. We were soon afterwards joined by some of the Ras's soldiers, and we acted the part of Fit-aurari in this inconsiderable division, riding on with all speed until sunset, when we stopped, that the Ras might have time to come up with us and give his orders. On his arrival, he directed us to go still forward, although it was quite dark, about which time we reached Armunteller; where, before day-light, a great number of men and women came to us, with bread, maize, &c. Many of the Enderta troops had also, by this time, joined us, together with Bashaw Dingerze of Tigré, who happened to arrive on business, and who expressed himself greatly concerned at the imprudence of the Ras, in venturing himself, with such a handful of men, against the Galla; on which the old man, looking at me and laughing, said, "See how frightened these Tigré fellows are at the Galla!" adding contemptuously to them, "Why, look at Pearce, who went down throughout Arrata by himself!"

After taking a little bread and maize, the day began to break; we were then upon the high mountain, covered with woods, exactly over Wassermer; and the Ras immediately gave orders for every one to be as silent as possible, and not attempt to shoot or hunt the deer or game, with which the place abounds. After this caution, we

began to march down the mountain, and, in about half an hour, being clear of the woody part, and the sun just rising, we could see the Galla encamped below; they had also observed us, and were soon mounted and at the foot of the mountain, before we could lead our horses down the rocks, which we did with great difficulty. During this time, several of the Ras's foot soldiers had descended, and were giving battle to the advanced foot of the Galla. At length, the cry of *Goverser Badinsah!* being heard in all quarters, as well as a loud volley of musketry, the Galla immediately became sensible of the Ras's presence, turned their horses to the plain, and rode off at full speed: scarcely any of our horses had got down in time, so that, after a three hours' chase, we could not come up with their horse; but of the foot very few escaped. We remained at Wassermer until the *arro cofla* had passed, and then, after hunting hogs, &c., for two days, returned to Mucculla.

About this time I became very ill, from a complaint in my head, especially about the forehead; for many months before I had felt pains in my eyes and forehead after much fatigue, but I now became so very unwell, that I was obliged to beg the Ras to let me go home. He said, that I had better remain with him, and that I might lie

quietly in his wife's house, close to his own, where he should be able to see me frequently. To this proposal I consented, and immediately sent for a Gojam Dofter, who professed great skill in medicine and charms. A swelling had by this time begun on the left side of my face, which gave me great pain, and the Dofter ordered me to eat nothing but goat's flesh. On hearing this, the Ras said, "Give Pearce every goat that is brought to me, either as a present or as a *gibbri*;" and, from this day forward, I received great numbers, which I always divided with Mr. Coffin.

While I lay sick, a dispute arose at Monsis between some Christian Zellans, (cowkeepers) and Taltals, concerning the boundaries of their grass on the mountain; in which one of the Taltals was killed, and the remainder, being subjects of the Ras, came with all speed to make their complaint. The Ras immediately sent out and had the offenders brought before him, when three were found guilty of the murder, and speared immediately by the relations of the deceased, at the Ras's gateway. This proceeding caused a great murmur amongst the priests, who said, it was too much to kill three Christians for one Mahometan. The old Ras, who was never known to do any thing barbarous or unbecoming, and was always a very merciful prince, replied "If I

had killed a hundred Mahometans for one Christian, you would have said *Edme heo kar*, [Long age to you] ; but that is not my law, for all that are concerned in murder ought to die." He added, "You have forgotten Ras Michael, to whom you dared not have spoken on such matters."

April 24th. [Baler Mariam]. The Ras marched for Chelicut, and ordered me to be carried on a couch before him, but I begged he would let me ride, as I could manage very well by being supported on both sides. By the time we reached Chelicut, the pain I felt became intolerable, and the swelling under the left eye and on the side of my nose became very large. I wished my attendant, the Dofter, to cut it, but he would not agree to this ; on which I sent for Mr. Coffin, who cut it in two places, but without affording me any relief. Friends and acquaintances from Antàlo and other parts, who had received intelligence of my malady, began to flock in, but the superstitious Dofter would not allow any one to see me, so that they were obliged to content themselves with enquiring only at the door. The good old Ras, in order to conceal his visits to me, used to set out as if going to the church to prayers, but, instead of doing so, he climbed over the high church-wall into my garden, and so entered my

apartment without being perceived. He did this at three different times, until I had become eased of my pain; which was at last effected by an operation performed by my own hands with a razor. A great quantity of blood flowed from the wound; and, with a little difficulty, I separated the large bone that formed the bridge of my nose.

When the Ras visited me, he used to sit by my side, pitying my fate and asking me repeatedly what I wanted, and persuading me to drink brandy to alleviate the pain. Of this liquor I had always great plenty, for the Ras himself never tasted any, and he had, for some months before, given me the privilege of receiving all that was sent to him, or made in his premises. I now began to get much better; and the Ras discharged my Dofter, who wanted to hang a string of charms about my neck and head, to which I would not consent. I can form no conjecture as to the origin of this disease, though it is very common in the country. A few days after the operation I was able to walk about, and soon gathered strength, but I still experienced shooting pains in my forehead, especially after meals.

At this period the Ras's brother, Ito Debbib, invited me to his town-house, at Woger Arreva, where he said I should soon recover my health; and he promised to shew me some curious stones,

like those at Axum, not far from his house, at a place called Quened; and, by permission of the Ras, I accompanied his brother to his residence.

Two days after our arrival at Woger Arreva, which is situated on the top of a mountain that forms the boundary of Endetta, in the Telfain, he took me to Quened, having several men with us with instruments for digging. Quened is a small village, on each side of a swamp, full of springs, which form themselves into a brook that runs into the river Dola. A vast number of willows, called in the country *queha*, whence it takes its name, grow in all parts of the swamp. Ito Debbib first shewed me all his gardens, which he employs priests to cultivate; and here I saw peaches, grapes, and other fruits, and, among the rest, some trees covered with white grapes, of which they take no care, but leave them as food for the birds, the priests holding white grapes in detestation; about which I had a long dispute with one of them, greatly to Ito's satisfaction.

He afterwards took me down to the plain below, and shewed me a large stone, about six feet by four, lying upon the ground. It appeared to me to have been formerly covered with an inscription, which, at a short distance, I could perceive more plainly than when I looked close at it. He also pointed out to me a spot

where lie two broken obelisks; they appeared never to have had any inscription upon them, and were very small. There were also several large stones, curiously cut, like those at Axum, lying about. Ito Debbib ordered his men to dig where, as he told me, the inhabitants had several times dug before, thinking to find treasure: the men soon turned up several stones, all about three feet long and a foot square, having inscriptions on them, which I imagined were Arabic. With Ito Debbib's consent, I sent a mule to Antàlo, to fetch Nuserella, a Greek, who could read that language. In almost every part in which they dug the labourers found the same kind of stones, and one was of an oval shape, and certainly had formed a part of some building. This stone had an inscription upon it that was neither Greek, Arabic, nor Ethiopic. There is no church at Queha, but there is a *moitrolloh*, or holy water, to which those afflicted with disease resort from far and near to bathe. It is kept by some monks, who obtain a good living from the patients who visit it. This place is about one mile and a half from Woger Arreva, on the Fellegdarro road, and about ten miles from Muntella, where, I have been told, there are other ruins buried; which, though I have often searched for, I never could find.

After Ito Debbib had shewn me all that he deemed curious, we returned to the town, where he shewed me great kindness, though two years before this he was my greatest enemy; indeed, he was one who wanted to kill me, and make Mr. Salt and his followers prisoners. The next day Nuserella arrived, and, before we took our first meal, we rode out to Queha. Nuserella looked at the inscriptions, which were as plain as if just engraved, and began to read, *Bismilla erock-murne eurockiem*—"Stop, stop!" cried Ito Debbib, "that is enough!" and the thought of its being Mahometan made him order the place to be filled up with earth immediately, expressing, as we rode home, some doubts about Nuserella's religion, and believing him to be no Christian, because he could read Arabic, or, as he called it, Salam.

After this, I remained several days with him, during which time I went with him down the mountain of Muntella, into the territories of the Telfain, to watch the motions of the Galla at Sheekot, while the *arro* passed Wassermer in safety. On our return, a messenger met us from the Ras, to acquaint Ito Debbib that he wished him to attend the cry for the deaths of the late kings, Yoas and Yonas, the news of which had just arrived. Accordingly, instead of going to

Woger Arreva, we repaired with all speed to Antàlo, where we found the Ras and the country-people assembled at the cry, in the market-place. Yoas died in Gondar, and Yonas died a few days before him in Gojam; both very poor, without leaving sufficient even to purchase a coffin to receive their remains, or money enough for *fettart* or *toscar*.

June 10th. After remaining three days at Antàlo, the period usually allotted for the cry, the Ras went to Lama, on the frontier of the Galla, to thatch a church, that had been built by his orders, against the ensuing rains. I still found myself ill in my head, but did not like to ask permission to remain behind, knowing how much the Ras wished me to be near him wherever he went.

At Lama we remained until the beginning of July, the Ras being always employed in riding about from place to place, no other person being seen on horseback except me and Mr. Coffin; every other horseman, gunner, or even officer, being kept hard at work by the old gentleman, in clearing the wood and bushes from a piece of land that he had ordered to be cultivated; there were also about five hundred ploughmen kept at work, ploughing and sowing; and he also ordered vines to be planted, in several places where he thought them most secure from the cold.

During the time we remained in this beautiful place, though I found myself very ill, the Ras kept me alive by obliging me and Mr. Coffin to ride races with him over the ploughed ground, more than ten times a day; and, when he thought that our own horses had had enough, he would make us mount others of his stud, and so keep us at it all day, and the rest of his people at labour, except when the rain came on and drove us to our tents.

I often observed the chiefs whom we had at work watch an opportunity to lay themselves down to sleep, or get to some quiet corner where they could play at chess; while we, from being more favoured by the Ras, were never able to escape from his sight. There was no other tent pitched, but the one occupied by me and Mr. Coffin: the Ras having thought fit to have a *goja* made for himself, and thatched like those of the rest of his chiefs. Ours, being an English tent, sheltered us tolerably well; though we were all of us, and especially myself, heartily glad when a messenger arrived to inform the Ras that the army from Walkayt had just succeeded in crossing the Tacazzé, without losing a soul, notwithstanding it had begun to rise, and that it would be at Gambela in three days. On receiving this intelligence, the Ras gave orders to the chiefs,

whom he left in charge to superintend the business that was to be done at Lama, and the next day we set out for Mucculla; where, after amusing ourselves on the road with hunting for guinea-fowl and partridges, we arrived in the evening.

I remained at Mucculla with the Ras until he had reviewed his newly arrived troops, and received the usual trophies, which did not exceed sixty-three in number; this seemed to dissatisfy the old man, though there were about one thousand prisoners. Among the men of rank taken were Asgas Sedit, Ito Batri Ola, and among the Ozoros of rank, Ozoro Gumbur, and Ozoro Wover, the latter being the kept-mistress of Gusmarsh Hilier Mariam, and the other, Ozoro Gumbur, having ventured to accompany her cousin, the Gusmarsh, to see him beat the Tigré dandies, as she called them, meaning something like dolts or asses in our English tongue; with these there came a large train of young women. The Ras, on this occasion, permitted every one to do as he pleased with his prisoners, when some kept them as servants, and others parted with them for a mule a head.

After this review I went to the Ras, and told him that I was becoming too ill to go about without very great pain, and that even my appetite had begun to fail. At first he tried to persuade

me to sleep in his wife's house, and to send for Tringo, my wife, to attend me; but, having convinced him that I should be much better in my own house, he at last consented to my leaving him; and I returned home and kept my bed. There I remained nearly a month, while Tringo tried all sorts of herbs, roots, &c., after her country fashion, to cure me; four pieces of very thin white bone came from the roof of my mouth, and twelve pieces and all the gristle from my nose; I also became for a time lock-jawed, so that, to keep me alive, Tringo used to pour a thin kind of nourishment, called *asmitt*, down my throat, through a small reed. Numbers of my acquaintance came to see me, and, in spite of the superstition of my neighbours, I advised them all to enter; and they would sit and talk to me, though I could not, for many days, answer. They frequently made me uneasy by their crying, in their country fashion, as if I had really been dead. By the Ras's orders, and at my request, Allicar Barhe, and all the priests of the Trinity Church, and Mariam Guddervitee, attended upon me, to administer the holy sacrament for the last time, or, as they termed it, to a *mungardiweger* [one about to depart.] Though very weak, and not able to utter a word, yet I could, by this time, open my mouth a little, owing to the relief I had

experienced from Tringo's poultices of herbs, &c.; and I retained my senses and memory as perfectly as if I had been in the best bodily health.

The ceremony of administering the sacrament was performed as follows: early in the morning, the head priest, Allicar Barhe, and my own priest, Guebra Mariam, came to demand my last confession. I could not answer them to be understood, but, through Tringo, I made signs that satisfied him, or them. They first asked me my christian name, and whether I had received the holy sacrament on my baptism day; and bade me now take it, as a cleansing from all sins past, and to consider it as a physic for the soul, that Jesus Christ had in his tender mercy bestowed on me, to cure and save it from everlasting perdition. They required of me, in case my soul should not depart from me at this present moment, through God's mercy, to abstain from all sins hereafter, to have no other wife than the one I had, to turn monk, and to give two thousand pieces of salt to the poor. My will was then made, in favour of my wife, my priest, slaves, and servants, leaving to each such portion of my property as I thought right; and, when all this was settled, the church carpets were brought in, and spread on the ground, and I was ordered to

be dressed in a cloth that had never been defiled, and to be laid on a clean carpet. Shortly afterwards the priests came in, singing hymns, and dressed in their holy apparel, and I received the sacrament from a priest, who first gave me a cross to kiss; after which they said some long prayer, and departed.

When all this was over I felt quite easy, except that I was now and then troubled with the cries kept up at the door by my acquaintance, who had assembled in great numbers to do me honour; indeed, the whole ceremony was carried on as if I had been the king himself. Instead of dying, as all expected, I soon began to get better, and the priest, who frequently visited me, did not forget to hint to me what physic the holy sacrament was, both for the body and soul; and I also considered, but said nothing, that, as I had two thousand pieces of salt to pay for it, the physic was rather dear, the value amounting to full sixty-six dollars. In the beginning of August, I could again walk about the house.

The Ras this year kept at Chelicut his fast for the Blessed Virgin, which commences on the 1st of August, or Narsa, and ends on the sixteenth. During this fast, the old man, like many others, always slept upon the ground.

About this time, messengers from Gondar arrived, who had crossed the Tacazzé on *onguors*, or rafts, with the *messerach*, or good tidings, from Ras Guxo, that his general, Ito Woldi Raphael, had defeated Munet Guarlu, of Gojam, who had rebelled; and it was supposed that Guarlu was killed, as he had not been heard of since the battle. Both Woldi Raphael and Guarlu were Guxo's sons-in-law. It is frequently the case in Abyssinia, that, if a soldier kills a chief, merely for the usual trophy, he does not own he did so, on account of the danger he is likely to incur from the chief's relations.

News was also brought of the death of the king, Wosen Segued of Shoa: the messenger who brought this intelligence had been detained some time by Liban, on suspicion of his being sent to Gojee, who was still at enmity with him. The king, Wosen Segued, was assassinated by one of his slaves. He had gone into one of the apartments to sleep with his wife, which, like the apartments common in all Abyssinia, was a small, round, thatched house, built behind his own house or hall; the doorway being in general low, the thatch very thick, and easily kindled with the smallest spark. The slave set fire to the thatch while the king and queen were asleep; but, being soon awakened, the king rose and dragged the

queen through the flames without sustaining much injury, when the slave stabbed the king in the ribs, and he fell immediately. The queen's screams were soon heard in all parts of the premises; the king survived a few days, and the slave confessed that some chiefs, who were then prisoners in irons, had promised to make a great man of him, besides giving him some gold in hand, if he would kill the king. The king, before he died, placed his son Woldi Sarvir, afterwards Sarlu Selassé, on the throne, and he revenged himself upon the chiefs for his father's death. This happened in June, 1813; Sarlu Selassé, like his father, became friends with the Ras, sending and receiving presents.

Mascarram, or September 1st, Kudus Yohannis (or St. John) is the first day in the year. During the five days of Pogme, which are after the last days of August, I had been advised to go into the river to bathe, and I found myself quite recovered. It is customary for all people to wash themselves in the rivers, on the third day of the five of Pogme, which is the holy-day of Kudus Raphael, and is as strictly observed as the eleventh of Tur, or January, which is Christ's baptism. The Ras had gone to Mucculla, to keep his new year's day, where he remained until the 11th, purposely to receive a great number of his chiefs, who

attended him to church. This holy-day, the 11th of September, is held in veneration on account of an old monk, called Abba Annernier, who fought, about three hundred years ago, against the Galla, and was killed in battle on the spot where he is now reverenced. It is said that he turned into a snake, which is constantly to be seen.

This sacred spot is about a mile and a half from Mucculla, in the plain of Gambela. There is no church, but a spring of water, called *moi-trolloh* (holy water) whither thousands flock, to be cured of their diseases. I have indeed known people come from Adowa and Gondar, to procure a little of the sacred earth from this spot, which is sewed up as a charm, and worn about a person afflicted with diseases. Round the spring large stones are piled up like a wall, and two large trees grow very near it, being the only trees or bushes for many hundred yards round. Determined to look closer into the superstitious notions attached to this spot, I got up one morning, under the pretence of going to bathe, but I dared not take any of my servants with me, for fear of their prejudices, and therefore told them to take my horses and mules to a place where they might eat some young grass, while I went to wash myself. I then went, just as the sun

had risen, and lifted up some of the stones, in doing which I saw four or five snakes, small and large, which ran immediately under the stones beneath; I afterwards replaced the stones, as they had been left there by the priests, for the snakes to drink out of, and returned to my servants, perfectly satisfied of the folly of those ignorant people; though I said nothing at the time, I had, before a month was out, strong reasons for breaking my silence, as will subsequently appear.

September 4th. Finding myself quite well, I went to the Ras at Mucculla; numbers of people had already begun to arrive, not only to visit the sacred place of Abba Annernier, but also to see how matters would go on at Antàlo, the 17th of this month being Mascal, when the yearly income is received, and every chief, with his troops, is reviewed: to such as the Ras thinks fit he gives preferment, while those he is displeased with are put back or dismissed from office, which seldom happens; however, every one of the higher rank strives to outdo his neighbour in the discipline and splendid appearance of himself and his troops.

September 11th. Being the aforesaid holiday, we began after sunrise to descend the hill of Mucculla, at the foot of which were waiting a

great number of horsemen, and, as soon as we had reached the plain, I and Mr. Coffin mounted our horses and joined with the rest in sham-fights, though very few liked to sport with us at close quarters, as the report of our pistols and blunderbusses often put their horses into confusion and made them ungovernable. Proceeding in this manner, we shortly arrived at the sacred place, where a *dass* was built with the boughs of trees and marshella stakes. Here we did not find the priests going on in their usual noisy way of singing, but were surprised to see them dragging along a poor Amhara priest, as if they meant to kill him instantly. He was brought before the Ras, and the priests called out that he had killed the *sardoc*, or saint. On inquiry, it appeared that this poor fellow, being a traveller from the Amhara, on his road to Axum, had seen the snake as he was washing in the sacred water, and had crushed the head with a stone, after which he called to the people near, and told them that he had killed a snake, when, to his utter astonishment, he was seized, and the priests insisted that he should be instantly put to death; but the tender old Ras, who did not like to take life, said, "Perhaps the poor man may be mad, we will chain him, and see if he is in his right senses;" which enraged the priests beyond mea-

sure. They swore they would have his blood spilt on the spot. I could not keep silence any longer, and stood up and said, "Ber Welled Selassé, hear me," and from that moment not a syllable was uttered until I had finished my story. I then related that, some months before, I happened to come to wash myself at this place in order to cure a complaint in my thigh, and I saw four or five snakes, among which, I added (thinking to help the poor man) was one larger than that which had been killed, and hence I supposed they had come from some distance for water, and that the snake, now dead, might probably from a similar cause have wandered to the spot. The Ras, upon my saying this, insisted that the wall should be well looked into, and, on the removal of the first stone, a snake was discovered between the stones near the same place, where the sacred reptile used to have water put before him. This statement immediately created great joy, and the prisoner was released, though severely reprimanded, and punished with a few smart stripes from the whip of one of the Ras's soldiers.

The service then proceeded as usual. A large quantity of frankincense was burnt at a small distance from the wall in which the snake was, and the altar was brought, according to the yearly

custom, from the church Yasous, on the hill of Mucculla, and the sacrament administered to those who wished to receive it. After the service, the Ras mounted his horse, and we all rode over the plains in the usual confused manner, it seldom happening on such occasions that several persons are not killed. I felt extremely happy that I had been, on this occasion, the means of saving an innocent man's life, though I had not dared to explain the whole extent of my discovery respecting the snakes.

September 12th. We went to Chelicut, where some Galla chiefs had arrived with a number of *sangas*, and the Ras gave me my choice of them, in exchange for my Mascal cow, I and Mr. Coffin being allowed a cow every month, as a standing order, and, when on service, one every three days. We had as many sheep as we wished for, and I have before said all the goats brought were mine*.

* It appears, from the above statement, that Pearce has dealt somewhat hardly with the Ras, in speaking of him as the most *miserly* of human beings, since, besides the allowances mentioned in this place, he was entitled to a large and regular supply of salt, and to all the brandy made on the Ras's premises, to say nothing of occasional presents. The truth, probably, is that the Ras, from long and difficult experience, had learned, like Elizabeth of England and Frederick of Prussia, that money forms the sinews of war, and therefore abstained from the reckless waste and profusion in which most of his contemporary chiefs indulged. —*Editor.*

September 14th. We went to Antàlo, I and Mr. Coffin taking with us every soldier, servant, or boy, that we could muster, dressed in the best attire we could procure for them, with new accoutrements for our horses and mules; and on the 16th the part of the army to which we were in general attached was reviewed: we joined them, dressed in English military uniforms which Mr. Salt had left us. All eyes were fixed upon us, and, being with the horse of Enderta, we were reviewed before the Tigré matchlock-men, who were about five thousand, commanded by Bashaw Gabriott. After we had gone through the usual fantastic manœuvres, and were riding out of the court, the musket-men began to fire before we had entirely passed them—a circumstance that we had always been cautious of at other times, but which to-day we happened to neglect. The consequence was, that we had one man killed, and Mr. Coffin's horse being shot through the hind-leg, he was obliged to make his escape on foot. These accidents happen every Mascal, on account of the greater number of the gunners having their muskets previously loaded with iron shot, and, having no means of drawing the charge, they, rather than be at the loss of one round of powder, will fire in this random manner, for it is to be observed that every soldier in Abyssinia

finds his own powder. I persuaded the Ras to issue an order, that no one in future should fire after he entered the market-place, but that this part of the ceremony should be gone through at Ouner Takley Himanute, the place where they first assemble*.

After the review was over we took leave of the Ras and followed our people, who had taken the body of the dead man, by my desire, to Chelicut, to be buried there; and, having given the priest a small sum for a *fettart* for our poor servant, we again set out for Antàlo, to see the remainder of the review. It lasted three days; Enderta and the neighbouring districts as far as Agamé were reviewed the first day, and they brought in their cattle. The Ras is always seated on these occasions upon a high gallery to receive the income, and at some distance from him are seated his secretaries, who write an account of the cattle, clothes, &c., that are brought into the court by the servants of the chiefs to whom they belong; after which, the chiefs themselves appear at the head of the

* From what I have learned from Mr. Coffin, there appears to be very little doubt that this apparent accident originated in the ill-will and treachery of some of the chiefs, who were dissatisfied with the marked attention and distinction with which the Ras treated our two countrymen. Indeed, the Ras seemed to suspect as much himself.—*Editor.*

troops of the respective districts, displaying their prowess in a manner that to any European would appear barbarous, at the same time making an extremely warlike show, notwithstanding their want of discipline.

Tigré was reviewed on the second day, with the neighbouring districts as far as Ammerseem, Wojjerat, and Agow. On the third day Guxo reviews his troops, &c., in the same manner at Deverertavor, his capital, in Begemder; Ackly Marro at Gondar, Ras Guebra at Inchetkaub, and Ras Ilo at Socotta. In every province, indeed, throughout Abyssinia, this custom is observed on the seventeenth day of Mascarram, called Mascal, or the feast of the holy cross. At the close of the first day's review, the high-priests of the different churches appear in the court, carrying large crosses, and singing, rather than saying, the first chapter of Habbakuk.

CHAPTER IV.

Death of the deposed king Itsa Ischias—Proceedings in a case of Murder—Execution—Escape of the Culprit—Law relative to Murder—March of the Army from Chelicut—Hikeër Mussal—Dacer—Aspect of the Country—The Aggerzeen, a species of Deer—Return to Chelicut—King Tecla Gorgis entreats the Ras to march to Gondar—Entertainment of the Ras, when on march, by the Chiefs—Mr. Coffin stung by a Scorpion—Feast at Moi Agenzean—Entry of the Ras into Axum—Meeting of Tecla Gorgis and the Ras—Ozoro Dinkernagh—Ozoro Duster—Wells—Gold Coins found at Axum—Giddams, or Sanctuaries—Customs respecting Visiters and Travellers—Interview with the king—Entertainment given to the Ras by Ozoro Duster—The King-Snake—Meeting at the Church—The Crying Cross—Picture of the Virgin Mary.

AFTER the review was over, I remained at Antàlo with the Ras, until Abba Garorr, October 5th, when I went to Chelicut, the Ras coming on the following day, with the intention of passing some months in comfort, there being no rumour of war. The death of the deposed king Itsa Ischias, father of Itsa Guarlu, the present king, was announced about this time. He died on September 13th, 1813; the Ras kept only one day's cry for him, though he was his father-in-law, through his late wife Ozoro Mantwaub. The Ras, after remaining nearly a month at Chelicut quite

undisturbed, began to feel inaction tiresome, and therefore determined to build a new church at Comfu, a short distance from Chelicut. Accordingly, the drum was beat in the market-place of Antàlo, for all Enderta and the adjoining districts to be ready to march to Dacer, every man bringing with him a rope and an axe, on the following Thursday.

The day before we left Chelicut, a woman had brought in chains a poor miserable object, whom she accused of having killed her husband; the witnesses also arrived from the small village of Gibba, to which they belonged. When the Ras had heard the whole story and examined the witnesses, he found the man guilty of murder, though apparently without malice, and told the woman, agreeably to the law, to do as she pleased with him. She replied, "I have no one but myself; I have no relation; neither have I a spear or knife." The Ras said, "Then you must hang him." She again replied, "How can I do that by myself? I have got a *mushcharn*, [a leather rope] it is true, but I cannot hang him alone." The Ras then ordered some of the groom-boys about the house to assist her in hanging the man to the darro-tree, on the green before the house. "God preserve you a thousand years!" said the woman, adding, in an under-tone, "His relations

are all here, and they will not have far to carry his body, as he belongs to the church." Mariam Guddervitee Takly, one of the Ras's stable-grooms, and some other of the slaves, had the management of the affair. When they came to the darro-tree, which is as easily climbed as a ladder, they helped the woman up with one end of the *mushcharn* in her hand, shewing her which was the best bough to tie it to. Takly, notwithstanding the woman had promised to give him plenty of butter for his trouble, now put the poor object's two hands within the *mushcharn*, round the neck, and, after tying it, ordered the woman to draw up the *mushcharn*, while they would lift him from off the large stone they had made him stand upon. Accordingly, she did this, and made it well fast, and then came down to behold him hanging, at the same time exclaiming, "Blessed be Mary Ann, the mother of God, who has given me revenge for my husband! bad as he was, I have stood true to him." After he had hung for some time, the crowd that stood to look on cried often to her, "Why woman, he has been dead long ago!" "Thank God for that!" said she, "but they shall not have my *mushcharn* to bury with him." Accordingly, she, with the help of Takly, climbed up the tree and loosed the *mushcharn*, while Takly took it from

his neck. The relations immediately came to take up the body, which they were allowed to do; but, before they had got ten yards, the dead man set off, without being carried, and ran into the Trinity church-yard, where he was safe, even though he had killed a thousand persons. The woman, seeing this, was enraged and ran to the Ras's gateway crying, "*Abbate, Abbate!*" She obtained admittance, and told the Ras that the man had not been hung long enough; the Ras, who had already heard the story, laughed and said to the woman, "Would you wish to kill a man that God will not permit to die? He hung long enough to have killed a cat." She answered, "Let me have him up again, and I will pull at his legs till I break his neck." "You foolish woman!" replied the Ras, "would you oppose the will of God?" Seeing that the old Ras looked grave when he said this, she believed it was God's will that the man should not die, and her spirit failed her, as she said, in a very low and sorrowful tone, "Though he is such an ill-formed creature, I have seen him do things that nobody else could do. The locust never touched the little corn he had behind his house; and though we used to make a fire to smoke them away we could not save ours as he did." She immediately went to the church and begged his

forgiveness, and they afterwards lived good neighbours as usual; indeed, I heard subsequently that he became her husband.

The law in Abyssinia stands thus in cases of murder: after the fact has been proved before the chief, he passes the sentence of death; when, should the deceased party have no other relation but a female, though she may have a husband, friends, or other connections, yet she, being nearest related to him, must strike the first blow, either with a spear or with a knife, when her acquaintances dispatch him immediately. Without the formality of her striking the first blow, the friends and relations of the woman would be reckoned by the offender's relations to have spilt their blood without just cause. As soon as the sentence of death has been passed, the deceased's family may, if it be agreed upon, take cattle in lieu of the murderer's life; one hundred head of cattle being the customary redeeming price. When the offender is put to death, the relations bury his body in the church, which is permitted by the laws; but those who kill themselves are not allowed this privilege of interment within the church-wall. If a chief insists upon a party taking an equivalent for life, he can do so; but then, whatever fine is agreed upon must be paid in the presence of the Shummergildas. This law passed

in the reign of Tarlack Yasous, the king, and was again proclaimed by Ras Michael Suhul, and afterwards repeated by Ras Welled Selassé.

November 12th. We left Chelicut, when the Ras had risen from his sleep after dinner, and encamped in the evening at Hiker Helleta, a rich plain, abounding in marshes and small streams, which supply the little river of Chelicut, and those rivers that run through Gambela, a fine part of the country, but always haunted by the Galla. Next morning we marched to the Dola, a stream which empties itself into the river Gibba, and rises in Derva, another long marshy valley. Thence we went to Hiker Mussal, where we encamped upon the bank of the river Argulta, which rises at the mountain of Dacer from many springs; here we remained until all our wood-cutters had arrived. Hiker Mussal is a very large town, inhabited by brave Christians, who defend their district against the Galla and Telfain. We next passed to the town of Dacer, which, like all others upon the frontiers of the Galla and Taltal, is built as close as the houses can possibly be placed to each other, with a high wall round the whole. There is a great square in the middle, large enough to hold all their cattle; the houses have all flat tops, within the walls, to which they adjoin; and the inhabitants get upon them to

defend themselves when attacked by the Taltal: there is but one gate of entrance to the town. The Galla seldom come thus far north, though the Taltals sneak about and kill many, such as boys looking after cattle, or people employed in the field.

About two hours after we had passed the town, we ascended into some woods of fine large firs and *houles*, the latter much resembling the olive. In this spot the Ras pitched his tent, in the snuggest place he could pick out, towards the thickest part of the wood, and we made our *gojas* as close together as possible, that our fires might be the closer to each other, and create the more heat; for, before the sun went down, we began to feel the cold, and, ere midnight, I was glad to get close to the fire, with two large cloths over me. In the morning, our sensations and the resemblance this spot bore to our native country naturally led us to discourse of home. Every tree was covered with a crispish frost, and, as the sun rose, the earth began to steam like a vast boiler. We went to the Ras's tent, and found him lying and talking to the slaves, rolled up in three cloths and a *burnuse*, with a large fire before him, and his head covered up. After bidding him good morrow, we were ordered to sit down, and he began asking us how cold it was in our own country, but never got from under his cloths. When we told him that the

water there froze so hard that we could drive cattle over the rivers, he seemed scarcely to believe us, and said, in a low tone, from under his thick covering, "I had rather you should live there than I." We sat, telling him stories of other parts of the world; but I could not produce any one interesting enough to induce him to put his head from under cover; until, about two hours after the sun was up, he took a short peep and said, "Kill the cow; we must eat before we go to work." The cow was accordingly dispatched, and he got up and buckled on his knife, and, after eating some *brindo* without bread, and drinking a horn or two of maize, he called all the chiefs in turn, and, knowing the strength of their respective districts, tasked them as he thought proper; ordering every one to fell so many trees, take the bark off, and bring them before his tent by sunset. I, having the command of his own household, was directed with my party to fell the long young firs, not larger than my arm, for roofing under the thatch, and, with little difficulty, we cut more than a thousand the first day.

From this place the view to the eastward, when clear of the woods, appears like a bluish misty sea, and forms the most dismal prospect I ever beheld; for, let the day be ever so clear, you can see nothing at this time of the year but vast masses

of clouds below you; though it may possibly be different at other seasons. To the westward are seen all the green valleys and plains throughout the country, and the mountains of Samen are distinctly visible. The woods in this place are about four miles in width, extending east and west, and in length several days' journey north and south. The *aggerzeen*, a large kind of deer, is very numerous here, and the warmth of our camp had enticed numbers to approach us, as they are not afraid of fire, like the generality of other wild animals. One morning, a fine large buck was found among the Ras's cows, and soon speared by the soldiers, who, according to custom, brought the hind-quarters to the Ras, by whom they were given to me. I sent the skin and the horns of this beautifully shaped creature, together with a sketch and the skins of some curious wild beasts, to Mr. Salt, in the year 1813.

December 10th. We quitted our camp, and marched for Chelicut by the same road we came, and the first night reached Barkie, where we slept at the premises of Ito Dimsu, the Ras's nephew; we were not more than fifty in number, every body else being ordered to carry, or assist in carrying, the timber to Comfu, near Chelicut.

The second day we arrived at Chelicut; where, at dinner time, the Ras observed to me, just as he

had taken a draught of maize, "One can take a good drink here, without making the teeth ache; but at Dacer every mouthful gave one pain." The chiefs arrived with part of the timber, at the place enjoined, in five days, though some of the heavy trees did not arrive till ten days afterwards, every thing being done by main strength alone, without the smallest assistance from any mechanical contrivance.

December 25th. Palambarus Guebra Selassé arrived from the king Tecla Gorgis. The message he brought was to intreat the Raș, now the king's son-in-law, to march by way of Walkayt to Gondar, and once more place Tecla Gorgis upon the throne. Asgas Sedit also arrived with a message to the same effect; but the Ras would not agree to these measures, unless the king would first quiet Waldubba and come to Axum, where he promised to wait upon him and make such arrangements as they might think fit upon the subject. Messengers had been privately sent backward and forward for some months before upon this business, but the Ras was unwilling to trust Tecla, with whose character he was well acquainted. Christmas-day falling upon the 29th of December, in Abyssinia, the Ras detained the different messengers to keep their feast with him, and then gave them leave to depart.

January 10th, 1814. News was brought by Palambarus Toclu's servant, whom the Ras had ordered to prepare at Axum for the reception of the king Tecla Gorgis, that he had crossed the Tacazzé, and was expected daily at Axum. The Ras, on receiving this intelligence, quitted Antàlo, where he had spent his Christmas, and returned to Chelicut; but, instead of holding the Tumkut review of his troops, which takes place on the 11th of January, he ordered them to be ready to march with all speed to meet the king at Axum.

January 12th. Notwithstanding its being the holyday, Kudus Michael, we left Chelicut, and marched to Alarsa, where we were entertained by Shum Giralta Toclu; next day we marched to Gullybudda, where we were provided for, in a large *dass*, made by the sons of Palambarus Toclu, but not so magnificently as by Shum Giralta Toclu, the quantity of whose bread, meat, and maize, almost exceeded credibility. Whenever the Ras is upon a march in his own dominions, every chief tries to outdo his neighbours in the quality of the cattle, bread, maize, and *sowa*, they prepare for him. Should the Ras be displeased with the manner of his reception, he either demands a fine from the chief, or displaces him altogether, and puts another in his stead; though the last must be a relation of the former, who has

a right by birth to become governor of the district.

January 14th. We left Gullybudda and marched to the river Warie, where we were supplied by several petty chiefs, at the head of whom was Ito Assemmant. In this place we also found a large *dass* built, and a platform made of clay and stones, with clay for a table about fourteen yards long, first covered with wild mint and rushes, on which bread and cooked victuals were piled in abundance: five cows were ready killed, and ten more were presented to the Ras. Maize and *sowa* were also handed round in large quantities.

On the 15th, we marched to Zonger, where we were provided for by the Gas Ischias, and the sons of the Cannasmash Ilow from Abba Tzana. Here the abundance surpassed all that we had seen before, and my tent was so full of bread, meat, maize, and *sowa*, though our people had continued feasting till midnight, that I and Mr. Coffin were obliged to sleep outside with our domestics. During the night a scorpion stung Mr. Coffin on the elbow; it had come from a stone, upon which he had placed his head by way of pillow. One of our people immediately cut the wounded part with a razor, to let the blood out, but still it gave him great pain for more than an hour after.

On the 16th, we marched to Moi Agenzean, where we were entertained by the sons of the Nebrid Alfiers and Aram. Nebrid Aram killed Nebrid Alfiers in 1807, and from that time the parties have been at enmity, though always kept quiet by the power of the Ras, who had forced them to be reconciled. The *dass* here was built by the above parties, each occupying one side; being both determined either to outdo one another or lose the last scrap in their possession. One side of the platform, which they had built for a table, having become one pile of loaves higher than the other, the opposite party immediately brought their own side to a level with it; while the girls, who brought in the cooked victuals, in the same manner, entered the *dass* in distinct parties. The Ras viewed this for some time smilingly, and at last told them that there was abundance, and more than would be that day consumed; adding that he was equally satisfied with both parties, which at once settled the business, and the plentiful feast began. It is always, by the by, a lucky chance both for officers and soldiers, when encamped in a district where there are parties in opposition.

On the 17th, very early in the morning, the Ras called me, to say that he meant to enter Axum on his favourite Bulla; not from any re-

spect to the king, but in honour of the Blessed Virgin, to whom the church at Axum is dedicated. He also desired me and Mr. Coffin to have plenty of powder, with our arms, and to ride close to him, one on each side; orders were then given for every horseman to have his horse saddled, it being a common custom in Abyssinia, with the lower sort of *wotada* [soldiers] to have one saddle only, which serves both for mule and horse, the latter being never mounted, except in battle or on private occasions. In the provinces east of the Tacazzé no one rides horses on a march, as they are led before the owner while he journeys on his mule; but in Gojam and Edjow they frequently travel on horseback when marching with the army.

We broke up our encampment, and marched towards Axum, over the extensive plain Attsowa. As soon as we came within sight of the town, the Ras got off his mule and mounted Bulla, every chief and horseman following his example. The chiefs were directed to keep their horses about six yards in the rear, where they formed one close body, while the old gentleman made me ride on his right, with our thighs nearly touching, and Mr. Coffin on his left; on firing our large blunderbusses, well loaded, the horses began to get warm, which greatly pleased the old man.

Having at his desire loaded and fired both our blunderbusses and pistols several times, great confusion was created among the chiefs in our rear, who were in a body consisting of one hundred and fifty, about six yards behind us, followed by six hundred *wotada*, whose spirited horses, not being used to fire-arms, became ungovernable. The horse of Ito Nockindis, a relation of the Ras, taking fright and plunging violently, fell down, broke its saddle, and hurt the young chief so much that he was obliged to be carried home to his country; but the Ras, still in high glee and never thinking of his relation, now and then said to me, in a low tone, "Put in plenty of powder: put in three or four cartridges; your arms are strong enough to hold a *mudfar*." Our horses pranced, as they galloped towards the king's tent, or *dass*, in the wildest manner, which quite delighted the old Ras, who rides better than any young man in his country, though age will not now permit him to indulge often in an exercise for which he had been remarkable in his younger days.

The king Tecla Gorgis had his tent pitched within the large *dass*, that had been erected for his reception, on the south side of the church-wall, which fronts the whole plain. He had ordered the front of his tent and *dass* to be left open, in

order that he might have a clear view of the Ras and his troops, and we were afterwards informed he was so much delighted on seeing me and Mr. Coffin in regimentals, firing while the horses were plunging furiously, that he stood up on his sofa to have a better view of us, exclaiming *Marlikteinge, Sonshivelem,* [They are angels, not mortals]. The moment we approached the entrance of the *dass,* which was crowded by multitudes of people, on each side, we sprang from our horses, the Ras very nimbly throwing his cloth round his waist, in order that his breast might be bare. On entering, he placed his hand upon mine, and I went into the *dass* with him, but as we approached the king, who was seated upon sofa in his tent, with a *munderger* [grate of fire] before him, and his attendants neatly dressed, and standing in their respective stations, the Ras let go my hand, and bowed with his forehead to the ground, remaining in that position about half a minute, when he rose and approached the king, taking a half-wheel round the inside of the *dass,* where, after standing about a minute, it was intimated to him to sit down, by a nod from the king, who, until he was seated, did not speak a word. The Ras made another low bow, and sat down upon a carpet spread for his reception. The king first broke silence by asking the Ras how he

did, and where he had got another gipsy, meaning Mr. Coffin, as he knew me before. Mr. Coffin had not yet entered the *dass*, but the king desired that he should be admitted; when the Ras informed him of the whole of Mr. Salt's mission, and of the presents he had brought for Itsa Guarlu. While the story was relating, the king said, "Stop, I must have the whole from Pearce," adding, "I know the Feringees are not dandies" [silly-people] "but very cunning fellows." Gusho, a Balermal, who stood upon his right hand, on receiving a sign from the king, came and whispered in my ear that I and Mr. Coffin should sit down. We remained seated some time before any of the chiefs were allowed admittance; but, at last, upon a whisper from the king to the Balermal Comfu, who stood upon his left hand, he went to the entrance of the *dass*, and ordered the Gusmati Ischias, Fit-aurari Guebra Amlac, Palambarus Wonderfrash, and Aszas Guebra Selassé, to advance and sit down. They obeyed the order with alacrity, made their bows, and seated themselves upon a carpet below that of the Ras, while perfect silence prevailed during a few moments, till the king began to make remarks on the Ras's horsemanship, the activity of his horsemen in general, and their discipline, as he termed what a European would have called madness.

The king paid the Ras many compliments, and among other things said, "Welled Selassé, you ride as well and as light, and appear as young as you did in the time of Ras Michael. How came you by that beautiful Bulla horse?" The Ras replied, "I had him given me by the Gusmarsh Zonde, about four years ago, when it was very young." "What have you done with your old favourite Shummet?" said the king. The Ras replied, "I have given him to Toclu, having now grown old."—"What, does not Toclu want a young horse?" replied the king. Palambarus Toclu, who stood at a distance, with the other chiefs, who were waiting upon the Ras, began to smile, knowing what would follow. "I think an old horse suits him best," said the Ras. "Why?" said the king, "has he got the *curtermart* [rheumatism]? "No, Ganvar*," said the Ras, "he has not got the *curtermart*, but a young horse is apt to give it him:" on which a laugh was set up throughout the whole *dass*. Palambarus Toclu, though somewhat displeased, affected to laugh also; he not only being noted for a bad horseman, but as ranking nearly first among the cowards of Abyssinia; though, in spite of these great defects in a soldier or chief, he commanded the largest

* The title of the king.

district in the Ras's dominions. Indeed, it is the policy of the Abyssinian rulers, to prefer their cowardly chiefs before others, being less fearful of their rebelling. After all, Palambarus declared himself much gratified by the Ras giving him Shummet; that horse he valued more than any in his possession, the Ras having never permitted any one but himself to ride him, till he presented him to Mr. Salt, to carry him from Chelicut to Antàlo, in 1810, which was regarded by every body at the time as a most unusual mark of favour. The joke being ended, the company was dismissed, except the Ras, who had a short private conversation before he left the king.

The Ras then visited the church, where, in the front of the great gates, the priest had assembled. All the carpets belonging to the church were spread out, and the priests, dressed in their holy and richest robes and crowns, were singing a hymn, throwing themselves into the wildest postures, as is customary on such occasions. This hymn, at the close of every verse, ended with *Welled le Selussé Woldi Kefla Yasousha hile hu yer Yasous Christoshu*—[Son of the Trinity, son of Jesus's follower, his strength is in Christ Jesus.] As the Ras approached, he threw the cloth from his shoulders, and made a bow, the head-priest calling out to him, "Dress, dress, by

the Virgin, dress!" when the Ras resuming his cloth, the head-priests presented him a cross to kiss. After standing a few minutes, the Ras, inclining his head towards the ground, desired a blessing, which the high-priest gave; the Lord's prayer being repeated by the assembled crowd.

The Ras next proceeded to pay a visit to Ozoro Dinkernagh, who arrived with the king from Waldubba. She is the daughter of the former Ras Ilo of Gojam, and wife to the Gusmarsh Christy Zonde, the late governor of Gojam; who, being overpowered by Guxo in a hard fought battle, in the plain of Dembea, made his escape round the lake Tzana to Agow Mudda; but, in making another attempt to recover his country, he was deceived by the troops he employed, taken prisoner, and kept in chains in the Island of Carretta Wolletta in the lake, where it was supposed he and another chief, the Cannasmash Woldic, were poisoned by Guxo's orders. Dinkernagh, though a handsome young woman, was so grieved at the loss of her husband that she turned nun, and went to the sacred wilderness of Waldubba, and had now come to the Ras, to prevail on him to use all means in his power to get her sent to Jerusalem. The Ras promised to do all he could to assist her in her undertaking. We then returned to our camp, where we found a large *dass*

erected by Palambarus Toclu, and the sons of Nebrid Alfiers, where we were as usual plentifully supplied.

When the festival was over, I and Mr. Coffin went to our tent, where we found Palambarus Toclu's servant, with a cow, a sheep, two thousand cakes of bread, and a large jar of maize, which had been carried to our tent by four men, upon a pole. Ozoro Duster, an old acquaintance of mine, had also sent me some cooked victuals, some maize, and a milch cow with her calf, desiring me to pay her a visit in the evening, with which request I was obliged to comply, though very much fatigued. I and Mr. Coffin wished to take a little rest previously, but it could not be done; our soldiers must have the cow killed, and by the time they had done eating and drinking, it was past ten at night. I had then to go to Ozoro Duster's, where I was crammed with another supper. When eating with a lady of this country, you have not the least occasion to use your own hands, except to wipe your mouth with a piece of bread, for they cram the victuals into your mouth so fast and in such large lumps, though perfectly minced, as to render it extremely difficult to swallow, until a person becomes used to it. At cock-crow I returned to my tent, where I slept soundly till after sun-rise.

I was afterwards called to dine with the Ras as usual, and found there a multitude of the Tigré people in great confusion, striving to settle how the Ras should be maintained by them. It was at length determined, that every chief should provide for his table in turn until his departure; those nearest had to provide for the first days, while those who had to bring provisions two or three day's journey next furnished the supply, and so on in rotation. It is surprising to see how safely they carry the large jars of maize over the mountains from Gundufta, &c. to Axum. It took them two days to bring the Gusmati Ischias's maize and *sowa*, and not one jar was broken upon the road.

The Ras remained at this place, paying visits every other day to the king, when they always had about an hour's private conversation together. We had here very heavy dews in the night, which caused colds throughout our camp; and the pool of standing water at Axum became so very muddy, through the number of cattle, that it caused many horses and mules to die daily. There is no river within two miles of Axum, but the inhabitants have good well-water; there are many wells hidden, and even in the plain numbers have been found, but the people are too lazy to clear them from rubbish. It appears probable

that, in ancient times, almost every house had its well, as I have been at the clearing of four, situated not more than ten yards from each other. The stone of which they are constructed is the same kind of granite of which the obelisks are formed. I was told by Apostella, an old Greek, who had bought a piece of ground from the priests, as close to the church as any of the buildings are allowed to be, that, in clearing the rubbish out of a well which he had discovered, he found some gold coins, which he shewed me; and indeed, two of the same kind came into my possession several months afterwards, but, unfortunately, having forwarded them to Mr. Salt, they were lost on the road. One of them had a bald man's head upon one side, and apparently arms upon the reverse. The second had a woman's head, with a forked crown on it, and something imitating a balance or scales; the characters were Greek. The coin was as thick in the middle as an English half-crown, though not thicker than a shilling round the edges, and in circumference about the size of an English guinea. None of the wells are less than forty feet deep, some of them much more. This Greek had formerly resided in Gondar and Adowa, but growing old, he had come to settle in this secure place during the remainder of his life; he is a silver-

smith, and most of the ornaments of the principal churches are his workmanship.

In the event of rebellion or civil war, Axum is never disturbed by Christians, and those who commit murder or the worst of crimes are safe from justice when once within the *giddam*, or sacred premises. There are many other *giddams* in Abyssinia that are equally respected, and, indeed, wherever the Abunas have resided and administered the holy sacrament, such places are venerated as *giddams* alike by royalists and rebels. The number of priests and deacons allowed a share in the land, or the rights of the *giddam*, will be seen in another place.

The Ras was still waiting for the arrival of Fit-aurari Suddal, brother to Woldi Comfu of Walkayt, and, I, finding myself rather unwell, obtained permission of the Ras to go to Adowa for a few days.

February 1st. I went to Adowa, where I stopped until the holyday Kudus Michael, which is the 12th; and after settling with my landlady, with whom I lodged, I returned by the Ras's orders to Axum. In Abyssinia, it is customary for every person whomsoever, in any kind of office under the head of a province, or a visiter from any friendly or hostile province, coming or going upon business to the head of that province, or

any one travelling under protection of the latter, to have lodgings and conveniences found gratis in all towns for himself and servants, but they must find their own provisions; and it is also a general custom, when a lodger kills a cow, sheep, or goat, to give the skin to the owner of the house, with a piece of meat, and frequently to ask him to meals, though this depends upon the good-nature of the lodger. Many of these petty chiefs, when they accompany their Ras or governor to a town, where they have no house of their own, nearly ruin the inhabitants, by burning the doors of their houses, tables, cattle-pens, &c. for fire-wood, drinking their maize or *sowa*, or killing their sheep. On these occasions, no one complains to the governor, for fear of having his premises burned altogether, and himself chained and brought into some unjust law-suit, which would inevitably drain him of his last farthing.

In all towns, there is a person appointed by the rulers of the place, to find out and conduct all strangers to lodgings, called *kordare*, and he who holds this office is provided for by the housekeepers of the town, who give him one piece of salt per year; on all holydays, also, he calls upon them for drink, and a piece of meat for his family, a sheepskin, &c. To those who most oblige him he seldom, if he can possibly help it, sends lodgers;

while those who displease him are sure, on the arrival of any chief, to have soldiers of the worst principles quartered in their habitations.

February 14. I arrived at Axum; where, finding the Ras had just gone to the king, I and Mr. Coffin went also to the king's *dass*. We immediately obtained admittance, and were ordered to sit down on the same spot as in our first audience. The king then began to ask me several questions; enquiring, what could be the motive of the king of our country for sending presents to Itsa Guarlu, whom he had never seen in his life, and exclaiming *Feringee tunealiner*, [Europeans are cunning ones]. I replied, "Our king is great and charitable to all poor Christians." "Great!" said the king, "is he so powerful as Welled Selassé?" At which the old Ras laughed, and said, "He tells me that all Ethiopia is nothing to compare to him, and that I am not so powerful as one of his Allicars;" meaning a governor or commander. "If so," said the king, "why does he not put an end to all followers of Mahomet?" "Ganvar*," I replied, "the English never compel people to religion by force, but by pointing out to them the true religion, from the Holy Scriptures; persons thus converted can

* Ganvar and Itsa'are titles of the king.

be depended upon, while those who are forced would only watch an opportunity of revenging themselves on their oppressors." . "Very true," rejoined he, "but it would be a good thing to give them a sound beating, and knock their towns down, or burn them, to let them see that the followers of Christ are more powerful under Amlac Hill, [the Supreme Being] than the followers of Mahomet are." After discoursing for some time upon the manners of the nobility, and the discipline of my countrymen, subjects to the king, &c. &c., he appeared greatly astonished at the answers I gave him, though he seemed to attach but little credit to what I said.

As it was late in the afternoon, I went to my own tent, after accompanying the Ras to his *dass*, where he immediately began to play at chess, which forms his chief amusement throughout the year, Sundays and holydays not excepted, save during the fifteen days' fast for the Blessed Virgin, in August; when he never plays either at chess or *gibberta*, his two favourite games.

February 16th. The holyday, Kedan-er-merrit. The head priest persuaded the Ras to occupy the very large house of the late Nebrid Aram, then in possession of my friend, Ozoro Duster, daughter of Nebrid Aram, and niece to the Ras. To this the Ras consented, and Ozoro

Duster occupied the house of Ozoro Wolleta Alassa, her mother, and the sister of the Ras, built within the same walls. I entered the hall, with the Ras leaning upon my arm, where the Ozoro had prepared an entertainment for him; the table was abundantly furnished, and, on the entrance of the Ras, she rose from the couch she had been sitting on, covered with fine carpets and pillows, which she had previously got ready for his reception. As I sat close by Ozoro at dinner, I had no occasion to put my hand to the table to feed myself, for she was kind enough to spare me that trouble; and, after the hall was cleared, she begged of the Ras to let her give me lodgings within the walls, saying, "He is very ill, and he will be better in my house, where I can give him what he wants: these cold nights, I am sure, must hurt any body that has been so ill as he has of late." The Ras, knowing our intimacy for more than two or three years, told me to bring my clothes and two servants, and to let the horses, mules, &c., be provided for in the camp. Ozoro Duster made a very low bow to the Ras, to convince me how much she was pleased with such an opportunity of shewing me her constancy. She was formerly the wife of Subegadis, whom the Ras had given to her as a husband, when he entered into an alliance with that

chief; but, the latter rebelling about three years after their marriage, the old gentleman sent a great force, and, by a sudden attack on the premises, during the absence of her husband, brought her to Antàlo, where I first became acquainted with her.

Notwithstanding the rebellious life of her husband, she always loved him very much; the Ras often persuaded her to take another husband, whom he would pick out for her, but I have heard her myself declare to him that she would never marry while Abba Garre, meaning Subegadis, was alive; whose vaunted name was taken from the first horse he rode to war in his youth, called Abba Garre Barra.

In the evening, while sitting with Ozoro, she told me a number of silly tales about Axum, among others a long story about the large snake that ruled the country. At the time this snake was king of Ethiopia, she said, all persons were their own masters, and used of their own free will to carry their tribute to the snake, which sometimes resided at Temben, though Axum was the favourite residence of the two. She likewise told me that the learned priests say, that this king-snake is still alive, but that, being angry with the people on account of their sins, he confines himself to the hollow mountain close to

Axum. She also promised to show me the troughs out of which the snakes used to eat and drink; a kindness I thanked her for, though I could not altogether keep from laughing.

In the morning, however, she begged of Ito Guebra Middin, her younger brother, to take me to this sacred place, and accordingly we went to the camp, saddled our mules, and set off. In about half an hour after, ascending the hill, by the pool, we passed Calun Negus, a little to our right, and in a quarter of an hour came to the spot, where Guebra Middin began to point out to me what he considered as very wonderful things. In this place stands a large flat rock of granite, as level upon the top as a platform, and at the end of this there is another rock, intermixed with red earth and gravel, with a deep ravine in the centre, apparently occasioned by the rains, which fall in a stream from a great height above the platform. In the middle of this granite rock are three large round troughs, neatly cut, about three feet deep, and about three and a half in diameter, which I suppose to have been made by the ancients to prepare some kind of cement in for building: but Guebra Middin gave me a very different story, which I affected to believe, for fear of creating a quarrel between me and Ozoro, his sister. He informed me that one of those troughs held the

milk, another *sherro* and bread *filfit*, or cooked victuals and bread mashed up together, while the third was the one from which the snake used to eat *cusho* every two months, *cusho* being the flour used to kill the tape-worm, without taking which every two months the Abyssinians could not live; though they have other medicines, made from bark of trees and bulbs, but none so effective as *cusho* in Amhara, or *hobbe* in Tigré.

On returning to Ozoro Duster, I pretended to believe all I had seen and heard of the king-snake, as I knew it would be folly to argue with such superstitious people. What made the joke better was, that when we were talking on the same subject at the Ras's, there happened to be an old man, a servant to the head Negade of the Ras's at Adowa, who had come with some money to the Ras, and, on his hearing the story, he told the Ras, that when he was a boy, and had not been long bought by his master, Buggerund Yanne, a Feringee came to his master's house, of the name of Yagoube, and his master told Yagoube about this snake being still alive, and living in the rocks near Axum, and that it used to come out of its den in the night; upon which Yagoube swore he would shoot him, if Yanne would give him a guide. The lad was accordingly sent with some other boys, the former carrying

Yagoube's double-barrel gun and plenty of powder and shot. When they came to the spot, they watched until they all went to sleep except the servant lad, when two large *gibs*, hyenas, came grunting and fighting together; the lad cried out, "Sidi Yagoube! sidi Yagoube!" The rest, being suddenly awakened, and hearing the growling of the hyenas, thought that the noise they heard was the snake devouring Yagoube; so they set off, and never stopped until they got within the church-yard of Axum, leaving him and Yagoube's only servant to search for him, but they saw no snake. After what had happened, Yagoube was ashamed to go into Axum, as the priests had heard that he was killed by the snake, and they would have been angry with him for pretending to do as he wished. The party therefore returned to Adowa, and Yagoube obtained leave to take the boy with him to Gondar, and to the Essneer Abby Suhkulla, where he remained with him until he went to Sennaar. The boy and some others went with the Feringee as far as Ras-el-feel, and as he gave them good wages they wished to have gone with him, but he would not take them. The old man who told this story was named Sasenas, formerly a Galla Slave to Buggerund Yanne, a Greek, Ras Michael's treasurer.

February 21st. Fit-aurari Suddal arrived from Walkayt, and was received by the Ras in a manner suitable to his rank. At supper-time, before we had begun to eat, Asgas Sedit came from the king, desiring the Ras and Suddal to attend at the church that moment, for, as it was the holyday dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, it would render all the agreements they entered into more sacred, and, the king having warned the priests of the proposed visit, the party found the church illuminated on its arrival. The king, the Ras, Suddal, Asgas Sedit, and the high-priest, were left by themselves seated in the middle of the church, where they discoursed for nearly three hours, taking oaths before the chief-priest, who ordered them to appear next morning to take the capital oath, as that ought not to be done in secret.

We returned about midnight, when all went to their respective lodgings, except Suddal, who came back with the Ras to supper, after which, before the Ras could go to sleep, Ito Russo came and insisted upon having some private conversation. He, being the chief with whom the Ras consulted on all private occasions, was admitted, and every body ordered out but myself, as I had for more than three years past been allowed the privilege of remaining with the Ras, during the

most secret discourses, either respecting his allies or his own affairs. Ito Russo began by reprimanding the Ras for his misconduct, telling him, that he would ruin himself and country by being connected with Tecla Gorgis. "You know," said he, "the oaths he takes are like a drink of water to him, and how many persons has he ensnared and destroyed by his total disregard of every species of obligation!" But the only reply the old gentleman could make was, "It's done now; we must cross the Tacazzé and look well after him in future." Ito Russo, on going out from the Ras, said several times over, "God give you wisdom, master!" after which the Ras lay down to sleep.

February 22nd. The king, the Ras, and those mentioned the night before, met at the church-gate, where numbers of chiefs and priests were present. The priests of the *giddam* were all dressed in their holy apparel, and as the sun got warm, being about ten o'clock, the priests were standing in a row before the church-door, upon the steps, when the crying cross was brought out and uncovered. The king first ascended the steps and kissed it; the Ras followed his example, Suddal next, and then all the rest concerned in the oath followed their example. This cross, called the Crying Cross of Axum, is believed by

the weak-minded people to cry whenever it is used upon these and similar occasions. Many people coming from a great distance pay a large sum to be allowed to kiss it, imagining that their sins are thereby washed away. Indeed, there is so much anxiety to see this cross, that even those far off will call out to the priests, "For God's sake hold it up higher that we may see it!" I suspect that those crafty wretches anoint this cross with some thick oily substance, which, when held in the sun, melts and shines like drops of water, but, no one being allowed to touch it except a priest or a monk, it is impossible that the cheat can be discovered.

In the year 1807, I was upon a visit with the Ras, on our march from Adowa to the sacred excavated church, Jummuddo Mariam, where there is a picture of the Virgin Mary suckling her child, probably painted in the time of the Portugueze, as the workmanship differs from that of the present Abyssinian artists. This picture is placed in a window, behind which is a dark place, and the priests told the Ras and the chiefs with him, that when any sinful persons were looking at it, it trembled violently. As I saw it myself at the time shake terribly, I looked about to see if I could discover any place of entrance, to get at the back of it, and soon observed a monk crawling out

of a very small opening in an obscure place; so, when I imagined no one took notice, I crawled in, and, after turning round one dark corner, observed a priest behind the picture, shaking it every now and then with a piece of string. I dared not to interrupt him, but being satisfied went out again. I did not forget to tell the Ras of this afterwards. He said that he believed it, "but it will not do," said he, "to quarrel with these rascals, for if I were to set them against me, I should not long be Ras."

The oath having been taken before the whole population, the drum was beat, to be ready to march in two days time.

CHAPTER V.

Pearce is obliged by ill health to leave the Ras and return to Adowa—He is joined by his wife—Recovers and sets out for Enderta—His reception by a Village Chief—Asgas Giggar—Pearce's party refused accommodation by a Farmer—Custom of Soldiers to quarter themselves on Farmers—Mountain of Avvaro—Arrival at Chelicut—Sudden death of two Servants, attributed to ghosts or devils—Illness and death of Pearce's son—Gifts—Funeral Ceremonies—Rapacity of the Priests—Death of Ito Debbib, the Ras's brother—Cry held for him—Mourning.

As I was at this time very ill and apparently getting worse, the Ras persuaded me to return to Adowa with Blitingatore Woldi Gorgis, the governor of the town, but, notwithstanding my ill fate, I begged he would take me with him, even if he was obliged to have me carried upon a litter, and said if I died he would know the end of me, to which the old gentleman would have consented, had not Ito Russo and several of the chiefs persuaded him and me, that it would be the greatest folly to be the means of my own death. It being at length agreed that I should go to Adowa, the Ras sent for Blitingatore Woldi Gorgis, and ordered him in my presence to give me every thing that I might stand in need of, and said loudly in the hearing of numbers, " If you do not look to him

as you would to me, I shall be very sorry." On taking leave of him, he said, "Trust in God, and keep up your heart, and I shall find you well on my return."

I left the camp, and the Ras and his army marched the same day: sometimes my people carried me upon a couch, when the road was very bad, but, when good, I rode my mule.

We arrived at Adowa, late in the evening; the governor, who had arrived in the forenoon, had procured lodgings for me against my arrival, as also for my people, mules, and horses. I had every thing that I could wish for, and immediately sent for my wife Tringo, from Enderta. She arrived in six days, and with her medical aid and some simples, the use of which she had learned from old women, I soon began to find myself better; and in the course of a few days, I could go about. Blitingatore came several times to see me, and indeed did not neglect in the least the Ras's orders.

Being quite recovered, I begged to take leave of him for Enderta, but he for some time wished me to remain until the Ras should return, the road to Enderta being very unsafe, as Asgas Giggar had quitted the camp and returned to his district without the Ras's approbation, and it was supposed that he intended to join Subegadis,

though, until now, he had not quitted his own district. Ito Musgrove of Basanate, and the whole of Arramat, had been left to look after the movements of Subegadis, who, though, as usual, he had denied the dominion of the Ras, remained quiet in his own province of Agamé, while his brother Guebra Guro was with the Ras and in great favour. However, I persisted in my intention, and the governor gave me leave to depart, after passing our feast, Fassegar Awasum, Ascension Sunday, which concluded the great Lent.

We left Adowa, after taking leave of Blitingatore Woldi Gorgis; and, in the evening, as is customary for all people high or low, I formed a small camp opposite to the house of the chief of the village. There were a great number of people with me, besides my own fifty shields-men and fourteen muskets; there were also twenty-two of the Ras's soldiers, who had been left behind ill, and nearly two hundred women, who, wishing to be in Enderta by the arrival of the Ras, and hearing the road was unsafe, had taken the opportunity of coming with me. We had not been seated long before the chief of the village came out, dressed in black, being, as I afterwards learned, in mourning for his wife, whom he had buried a few days before. Upon hearing this,

the whole of our troops formed themselves into a circle, the women on one side and the men upon the other, and kept about ten minutes' cry; after which I was ordered into a large *dass*, my feet were washed, and, although the old man seated himself upon the ground, he insisted that I should sit upon his sofa. My host was named Yassu; he was formerly Fit-aurari to Ras Michael, and a near relation of Ras Welled Selassé. I had been acquainted with him for several years; he was always a very jocular old boy, and now, notwithstanding the late death of his wife, with whom he had lived more than fifty years, he began his usual jokes, and, seeing my wife seated by my side, he said, "Ah! I lost as good a wife the other day as ever your Tringo was; she would sit from morning to evening without ever getting up, during which we would drink out two large jars of maize; and then, what nice victuals she used to cook!"

In the morning, when I wanted to start, he insisted upon my taking the road of Giralta, saying, that Ito Debbib, the Ras's brother, being very ill, his son Ito Dimsu had returned from camp, and, although he had more than a thousand men with him, he was obliged to take the road round by Mugga in Giralta, for fear of Asgas Giggar. I swore that I would not alter my route, and that

if Asgas intended to stop the public road in defiance of the Ras, he might begin with me. I accordingly set out, and, about two o'clock in the afternoon, we came to the district of Asgas Giggar. We halted by the river Wam, whence we could see Asgas, sitting upon the wall that was in front of his house, upon the mountain above us. I sent two boys to him, with two horns, ordering them to give my compliments, and beg that he would have the goodness to fill the horns with maize; and, in about an hour and a half, they returned with them filled, and one of Asgas's men, with two fine goats and two sheep. He told me that his master greatly wished me to pass the remainder of the day and night at his house; "but you know," said he, "the country people would raise some false report against you, if you were to enter my master's house," adding, "Ito Dimsu was afraid to pass, and went by the roundabout way, but my master may be offended with the Ras, his uncle, without turning rebel." After thanking his master for the sheep, goats, and maize, we again set out and travelled very cheerfully.

The women and several of the men had been greatly frightened before we passed Asgas Giggar's district, but now began singing, "To Pearce the same luck as our Maker has given to the Ras!"

This song lasted until we reached Gullybudda nearly at dark. The governor of the town having gone to the camp, I could get no good lodgings; so I sent to one of the Ras's *arristies*, or farmers, a very rich man who denied himself, and sent his daughter to tell my servant that her father had gone to Antàlo that very day, and would not return for a week. This I knew by experience to be the customary scheme, so I sent word back to the woman, that, as her father had gone to Antàlo, she must get the house ready for my accommodation, and that I would take care of it until he returned, as I could not think of leaving the Ras's cattle exposed to the danger of being taken by Asgas Giggar, who, she knew, had refused to follow the Ras to war, and deserted from the camp. I likewise sent her orders to get my supper ready directly. My servant soon came back running, and the old farmer, his son-in-law, and several ploughmen, advancing slowly; as they approached they threw their cloths from their shoulders, and fastened them round their waists. I ordered my people to tell them not to come near me empty-handed; however, they bowed to the ground, and put stones upon their necks, upon which I could not help allowing them to advance, though much to the discontent of my soldiers, who wanted me to make a market of the old rascal, by

insisting upon having ten cows for denying himself. This I had authority enough to do in this part of the Ras's dominions; but, being rather more humane than the Abyssinians generally are on such occasions, I refused to follow their advice. So, when the old man came up, he first began cursing his daughter, saying she had made a mistake, but had not wilfully denied him. I told him that I could not overlook the affair altogether, but that he must make some amends for his fault: he then offered two fat goats, besides supper for all the soldiers who were with me. This was refused, and, after some hesitation, he brought a cow with the goats, which also I refused, as she was not fat enough. At last he brought us a fat one, which I received, and, after promising not to acquaint the Ras with his denying himself to me, we got our suppers, with plenty of *sowa* to drink, but I kept the cow and goats for the next day.

In Abyssinia it is a custom, even when the king, Ras, or governor, are at home, for their soldiers to form themselves into small parties and put one, whom they consider worthy, at their head, and go into the country from farmer to farmer, living at free quarters, no one daring to deny them, unless they are too exorbitant and unreasonable in their demands. On these occasions the villagers will give a general alarm, and

raise the neighbouring villages to their assistance, and many lives are often lost on both sides. When this reaches the ears of the governor, he has both parties brought before him, and, if it is proved by oath, that the farmer offered them every thing reasonable, such as a kid, bread, and *sowa*, the soldiers are severely punished, their arms are taken from them, and they are dismissed; and should they have killed any of the people, those who struck the fatal blow are given over to the relations of the sufferers or sufferer; but, on the contrary, should the farmer have refused to give them a supper and even lodgings, he is fined perhaps more than he is able to pay.

I left Gullybudda in the morning, and about an hour afterwards I halted at the river Guddegudda, which runs through the plain between Gullybudda and the foot of the mountain Avvaro. Here I ordered the cow to be killed, and numbers of the women, who had not had any supper over-night, now received plenty of *brindo;* in less than two hours there was nothing left but the bones and skin, the latter being the perquisite of the *chellicar sigar*, master of the meat, which he sells to the leather-maker. We left the river Guddegudda about mid-day, the sky being very cloudy, and, about half past one, we began to ascend the mountain Avvaro, which divides Dova from Kala,

meaning the cold and high country of Enderta from the low and warm country of Tigré. The road up the mountain is very bad, but a good mule will carry its rider up or down with safety. We stopped, for about an hour, at the church Kedaner-merrit, half way up the mountain, which is almost hidden with large trees; there are several caves in the sides of this ridge of mountains, like excavations, but Nature has formed them, and they are converted into churches and dwellings for *bartones*, or virgin-monks. They cannot be seen at any distance, either from above or below, being entirely hidden by shrubs and trees that grow wild from the projecting rocks.

About four o'clock we arrived at a village in a plain upon the highest part of the mountain, and, although the cold was intense, we were obliged to stop before we could descend to a warmer spot, some of my women-servants being tired, and not having yet come up the mountain. This village belonged to a son of Shum Giralta Toclu, who had been left behind to look after the country, while the father was at camp. I sent to him, immediately on learning where he was; being, as he pretended, unwell and at a great distance, he said he could not come, but he sent me a goat, some bread, and a jar of maize.

Next morning I set out early, and, in about

four hours, came to the river Gibba. It being about ten o'clock, we halted, and killed a sheep and baked some *berenters*. After we had eaten, we again set out about twelve o'clock, and on our road we had a sharp shower of rain, which gave us a good wetting.

About four o'clock I arrived at my own house at Chelicut, where I found my gatekeeper and gardener had died four days before, and the superstitious people wanted to persuade me that they were killed by ghosts, or devils, as they were both found dead together in the morning, after going to bed in perfect health, and having no signs of any wound upon their persons. The priests obliged me to let my people fire off all the fire-arms into the house, before any one should enter, and then to kill a sheep upon the ground-floor, and let the blood run upon the ground, and also drink out a jar or two of maize; to all of which I immediately agreed, knowing the extent of their superstition upon such occasions.

In all parts of Abyssinia, it is customary when any new house is built, or a building has been left uninhabited for some time, and where there have been cattle killed and drink distributed, to kill a cow or a sheep, and distribute it within the buildings, which it is presumed satisfies the ghost of the place, who leaves the dwelling in peace;

but, when such places become neglected, it haunts them and kills those whom it finds within the walls; and in this opinion every inhabitant of Abyssinia will firmly persist against all reason whatever.

My neighbours brought me plenty of bread, cooked victuals, and maize. The head-priest, Allicar Barhe, and Asgas Gabri Yasous, the Ras's steward at Chelicut, maintained me three days, until I got my house put to rights, and even gave the women and strangers, who came with me from Adowa, a lodging and supper.

Being informed that Ito Debbib, the Ras's only brother living, was very ill, I went every morning to see him, and returned about noon, it being a long ride, but over a level plain, after getting over the mountain of Comfu. One day, he prevailed on me to remain all night, but in the morning I begged to leave him to go and see my son, who was very ill also, and I promised him to return the same day. Upon my arrival at home I found my boy very ill, a great deal worse than he was when I left him; he brought this illness from Antàlo, where I had sent him with his mother, a Galla slave, to live with a friend until we should return from camp. On this occasion a very extraordinary circumstance happened:

while I was sitting by the poor boy, a servant of Ito Dimsu entered the house with the blood running down his cheeks, crying bitterly, *Guity! guity!* [Master! master!] Hearing this, I ordered my horse to be saddled, knowing before he spoke that his master was dead. As I was going to mount, and had got one foot in the stirrup, I heard a cry all of a sudden from the people whom I had left in the house, in the Amhara language, *Ligho! ligho!* [Your son! your son!] I returned into the house, and perceived that the breath had departed from my poor boy, the only child God had been pleased to bestow upon me. Never in my life did I experience such a shock, though I strove to refrain from sorrow, but to no purpose. The sight of the poor dead boy I loved so dearly, and the disappointment of the expectations I had formed of his proving on a future day the only comfort I should have, afflicted me so much that I really wished to die with him.

Ito Dimsu's servant saw the whole melancholy affair, and went off without saying a word, and the townspeople came flocking in crowds, until both the house and yard were full; for my own part I could not bear the sight of any one; I would rather have been left by myself, but that was impossible. The priests came, and the cus-

tomary prayers were read, and my poor child was carried away to be buried, his mother following in a distracted manner.

After the funeral, the people returned to my house; and after they had cried for about half an hour, I begged they would leave off and let me have a little rest, as I found myself unwell. They complied, and left me with only a few friends; but, in a few minutes, the people of Antàlo, my acquaintances, hearing of my misfortunes, came flocking and began their cry, and I was obliged to sit and hear the name of my dead boy repeated a thousand times, with cries that are inexpressible, whether feigned or real. Thôugh no one had so much reason to lament as myself, I could never have shown my grief in so affected a manner, though my heart felt much more.

Before the cry was over, the people with *devves* were standing in crowds about my house, striving who should get in first, and the door was entirely stopped up, till at last my people were obliged to keep the entrance clear by force, and let only one at a time into the house. Some brought twenty or thirty cakes of bread, some a jar of maize, some cooked victuals, fowls, and bread, some a sheep, &c.; and in this manner, I had my house filled so full that I was obliged to go out into

the yard, until things were put in order and supper was ready. The head-priest came with a jar of maize and a cow.

What neighbours and acquaintances bring in the manner above-mentioned is called *devves;* the bringers are all invited to eat with you; they talk and tell stories to divert your thoughts from the sorrowful subject; they force you to drink a great deal; but I have remarked that at these cries, when the relatives of the deceased become a little tranquil in their minds, some old woman, or some person who can find no one to talk to, will make a sudden dismal cry, saying, "Oh what a fine child! and is he already forgotten?"* This puts the company into confusion, and all join in the cry, which perhaps will last half an hour, during which the servants and common people, standing about, drink out all the maize, and, when well drunk, will form themselves into a gang at the door and begin their cry; and if their masters want another jar of maize to drink they must pour it out themselves, their servants being so intoxicated that they cannot stand. In this manner they pass away a day without taking rest.

* The whole of this scene bears a most remarkable similarity to the ceremonies observed at the funerals of the lower orders o Irish.—*Editor.*

I must say, however, that the first part of the funeral is very affecting, and the only fault I can find is, that they bury their dead the instant they expire. If a grown person of either sex, or a priest, is by them when they expire, the moment the breath departs, the cries and shouts, which have been kept up for hours before, are recommenced with fury; the priests read prayers of forgiveness, while the body is washed, and the hands put across one another, upon the lower part of the belly, and tied to keep them in that position, the jaws tied as close as possible, the eyes closed, the two great toes tied together, and the body is wrapped in a clean cloth and sewed up; after which the skin called *neet*, the only bed an Abyssinian has to lie upon, is tied over the cloth, and the corpse laid upon a couch and carried to the church, the bearers walking at a slow pace. According to the distance of the house from the church, the whole route is divided into seven equal parts, and, when they come to the end of every seventh part, the corpse is set down, and prayers of forgiveness offered to the Supreme Being for the deceased. Every neighbour helps to dig the grave, bringing their own materials for the purpose, and all try to outwork one another. Indeed, when a stranger happens to die where he has no acquaintances, numbers always flock to

assist in burying him, and many of the townspeople will keep an hour's cry, as if they had been related. There is no expense for burying, as every one assists his neighbour, as I have mentioned above. But the priests demand an exorbitant sum, from those who have property, for prayers of forgiveness, and I have seen two priests quarrelling over the cloth of a poor dead woman, the only good article she had left. If a man dies and leaves a wife and child, the poor woman is drained of the last article of value she possesses to purchase meat and drink for those priests, for six months after her misfortune, otherwise they would not bestow a prayer upon her husband, which would disgrace her and render her name odious amongst the lowest of the populace. In this manner, I have known many families ruined.

An Agow servant of Mr. Coffin's, who had been left behind with me on account of ill health, died at Chelicut, where he had formerly taken a wife, and the little wages he had saved had enabled him and his wife to keep a yoke of oxen, she having a piece of land of her own. Knowing the man to be very poor, and the great regard he had for his master, I was induced to give a fat cow and a jar of maize to the priests, to pray for the poor man's soul; this they took, and

the poor woman made what corn she had into bread and beer for them, after which they refused to keep their weekly *fettart* [prayers of forgiveness] for a month, unless she paid them more, to complete which, and to satisfy these wretches, she was obliged to sell her two oxen, and the poor woman was again reduced to work and labour hard with the pickaxe.

The drum having beat at Antàlo, for the people to assemble at that place, to keep the cry for the Ras's brother, Ito Debbib, on the plain below the town of Woger Arreva, where he died, on the Thursday following his death, notwithstanding the loss of my only son, I saddled my mule, and joined in the cry, to show my respect, in company with Ito Woldi Raphael, the Ras's nephew, who had been left in charge of Wojjerat against the invasion of the Galla, and who was passing by Chelicut with his army, on his way to the cry, when I was about starting.

He stopped a few minutes to cry for my boy, and then we set out together for the plain, which, upon our arrival, we found thickly covered with people of both sexes. The *argover*, which is a sofa arched over with canes and covered with silk curtains, was just descending from the town, which we could see at a distance, with numbers of soldiers in the front firing their matchlocks;

and by the time we came up, the sofa was placed in the customary position, and the carpets and other articles of grandeur that belonged to the deceased were spread round about it. This sofa is to imitate the bed on which the deceased died; his effigy is also made and put upon one of his mules; his horses are led before with his musket-men, the whole of his household following, with their shields and spears, having nothing but a skin round their waist, with their forehead and temples all torn, shouting and crying in a horrid manner. The churches of the country send each a *deval*, which is an article of taste, made of silk or carpet stuff, in the form of an umbrella, and fixed upon a long pole; and they pay the men who bring them two pieces of salt each, all churches having more or less of them according to ancient custom; but the church belonging to the town or village where the deceased died sends all its *devals* and public ornaments to grace the funeral. There were three hundred and fifty standing at this cry, which was considerably more than there were at the cry of Ito Manassey, his brother, and it was greatly talked of among the population. The women are seated on these occasions in one large body, and the men in another; they rise from their seats, one at a time, and, after repeating rhymes in honour of the deceased, the ceremony

finishes with a lamentable cry from all the assembly.

There are numbers of men and women, who get a living by making rhymes and attending at cries, who are often sent for from a great distance, to attend the cry of a person of distinction; and, if they are noted poets, they receive high pay in corn, cattle, or cloth. I am acquainted with a very handsome middle-aged woman, who, though she has a large estate to live upon, has studied poetry from her infancy, and attends gratuitously at all cries that are very public, and for no other purpose than to distinguish herself. She is reckoned the best poet, either in the Amhara or Tigré language, in the country; her name is Welleta Yasous; she was born in Gondar, but her father was a Tigréan. Many great men have offered to marry her, but she could never be persuaded to listen to their proposals, though I do not mean to say she led a chaste life, a very rare virtue indeed in Ethiopia.

The Amhara people differ from the Tigré in their manner of crying and weeping: that of the latter is very affecting, but that of the former is really ridiculous. They dress themselves as fine as possible, and cry, sing, and dance, to the beat of a drum; when the cry is over, those who have not far to return to their homes in general feast

with the relatives of the deceased. When such great people as Ito Debbib die, a general cry is held throughout the whole country, both in Amhara and Tigré, and for three days' journey around the people will bring *devves* to the relations.

The natives of Tigré are more accustomed to wear mourning than the Amhara, and some, instead of making mourning cloths, wear their cloth until it is entirely black with dirt, and this serves them for a mourning suit. They in general go into mourning for sixty days: some wear a piece of blue Surat cloth, such as the merchants bring from the East; but the true mourning suit of the people of rank is a new white cloth, first dyed yellow with *waver*, the wood of a tree, which the monks use to dye their garments. When the cloth is dyed yellow, it is again buried in a black mud, common in all plains, called *walkar;* after remaining buried three days, it is taken out and washed, but still remains black. Such suits of mourning will last in a family for many years they borrow and lend them also among friends.

Ito Debbib, being of a different religion from the Ras, and his deceased brother, Manassey, was not buried in the same church as Manassey, but was taken to Surrova, and buried in a church dedicated to Abuna Slathivus, belonging to those who profess the religion Bate er Slathivus; the

whole of Gojam profess this faith, and nearly half of the large province Hamazen.

After the expiration of the cry, which lasted three days, I returned home to Chelicut with Ito Woldi Raphael, that being his nearest way to Antàlo, where he wanted to go; here we received news that the Ras was upon his return, and encamped at the Tacazzé, near Avergalle.

CHAPTER VI*.

Mr. Coffin's Journal of the Expedition to Gondar—Departure of the Army from Axum—The River Tacazzé—River Moi Lomin—Oranges—Cotton—Irrigation—Monkeys—Strong Mountain of Chirremferrer—The Troops annoyed by Stones rolled from the Mountain—They take it by Storm—Fodder for Cattle—Hay not known in Abyssinia—Dangerous mountain roads—The Worari, or Foragers—Gudgauds, or Pits for concealing Goods—Adventure of Pearce in a Gudgaud—Tree called Genvarar; superstitious notion respecting it—Encampments—The Ras enters Inchetkaub, the capital of Ras Guebra—Arder Rummet, the capital of Walkayt—Reception by Woldi Comfu—The Shangalla—Elephant-hunt—Story of a Monk—Strength of the Army—Sudden Death of Woldi Comfu—A Galla girl stolen from the Ras by his Nephew, Shum Temben Sarlu—The Ras deprives him of his districts—Treaty with Guxo and Ras Ilo—Beautiful Valley of Shoader.

FEBRUARY 24th. We struck our camp at Axum, and marched by a forced march to Arder Sarfe, thinking that if we made slow marches Ras Guebra would be warned, and would have time to drive the cattle out of the country to his strong mountains. This is a small district in Barrerquor, belonging to Ito Sallander, one of the grandsons of the king Minicuffa, who provided for the Ras every thing that his little district could afford. The next day we marched to a small plain, called

* For the whole of the account of the Ras's expedition to Gondar, which occupies this and the next chapter, Pearce is indebted to the kindness of Mr. Coffin, he himself having never been nearer to Gondar than the mountains of Samen.—*Editor.*

Ardersarhi, about six miles from the large and capital town of Mumfrets, in Shiré; here we encamped among high rushes and fine grass, and were provided for by Chellica Comfu, of the Ras's household, the commander of that district. The following day we marched to the Tacazzé, which we crossed and encamped upon the west bank, where some petty chiefs, under the Ras's dominion, brought him two cows, some maize, and bread.

In the morning, our Fit-aurari marched before daylight, and the Ras after sunrise. On account of the king, who had his favourite wife Ozoro Cottser with him, he had two small tents always pitched at a small distance in the rear of the Ras's tent. Our road lay to-day nearly south, and seldom far from the Tacazzé. The Worari foraged in all directions; and several hundred sheep and goats, and a few cows, were brought, in the evening, into the camp at Moi Lomin, a beautiful little narrow river, which rises in the different mountains of Samen, and runs very rapidly into the Tacazzé. Moi Lomin signifies Water of Limes; Buckerer Lomin would signify Water of Oranges. Many sour oranges, and vast quantities of limes, grow in different spots of garden-ground, for several miles in its vicinity. It is a deep valley, not in the least affected by the cold from

the mountains. A great deal of cotton is cultivated on the banks of this river; it is watered by cuts from above, or small channels about two feet wide, which run along the sides of the mountain, and enable the inhabitants to water the ground with little trouble. In all parts of Abyssinia, indeed, during the dry season, the lands are watered in a similar manner, when near the rivers, and some grounds frequently grow two crops of any sort of grain. The corn that is obtained in the dry seasons by irrigation is called, in Tigré, *taff agi;* but this corn is not so much esteemed as *taff currumpt*, which is the corn produced after the rains have fallen.

We passed our Sunday in this delightful spot, where I shot some monkeys of a beautiful kind, called *warg*. They have a white beard, black face, yellow hairy body, and a long tail, with a brush of white long hair at the extremity, the skin on the belly being of a bluish silver colour. I kept one of these animals for three years, with several other kinds of monkeys, but I found none so cleanly and cunning as the first. The *chillerder*, another native of Samen, is also a very clean animal for a monkey; this is of large size, with a black face, very dark brown hair, and a red bare cross on the breast, and it has a very particular cry when calling to its companions, or to its

young when fearful. I kept one of them for a long time, but the continual mischief she did me and my neighbours caused me to grow weary of her, and, after breaking a looking-glass belonging to a lady of Chelicut, an article that could not be replaced in this country, I, in my anger, set my dogs upon her, who devoured her immediately. I did this more to satisfy my neighbours than from any personal motive, for, often before, when I had tied the animal for her mischievous tricks, she would cry out *Humu* for hours together, so distinctly, and look so pitiful, that I could not help letting her loose again out of mere compassion.

March 1st. We left Moi Lomin, and marched over the mountains to Chirremferrer, one of Ras Guebra's strong mountains, but far inferior in strength to Amba Hai. As the Worari approached this mountain, skirmishing with the enemy, who were in large bodies driving their cattle to the top of the mountains, numbers of our men were killed and wounded by stones thrown from the top of the mountain, some of the largest of which did more execution than a hundred muskets. In peace, as well as in war, large piles of stones are kept upon these mountains, and some very large ones are slung with ropes round the edges of the precipices, so that in case of an attack they are ready to be cut from

behind the piles, or thrown, without the natives being exposed to the enemy's fire-arms. The Worari were compelled to desist until the Fitaurari came up, when he also was obliged to halt at a safe distance from the foot of the mountain; but, on the Ras's approach, the shout of "*Goverser Badinsah!*" was heard from all quarters of the army, and the soldiers began to ascend like so many apes in all directions; and, though numbers were killed and wounded by the pieces of large stone that came rolling down the sides of the mountain, they gained a small hillock, where they were out of danger of the stones that hung in great piles from that side. Upon this hillock, about thirty musket-men had already secured themselves, and, with little difficulty shot any one who approached the piles in sight, in order to throw down the stones. Several of the enemy were shot in attempting to cut away some large stones that were hung with stripes of cow's hide, which being dried were so hard that they could not be divided without great difficulty, exposing those who attempted it to the fire of our gunners. I shot one of the enemy, while endeavouring to disengage one of the stones; he fell to the bottom of the precipice, but I did not of course practise the barbarity common on such occasions, for which the Ras afterwards chided me, as he had

frequently done before, at which times I have taken the liberty of telling him that his countrymen, who could thus mangle a dead body, were little better than brutes and cowards. I sometimes got the better of them in argument, when they would reply, "Our fathers have shown us the example, as well as in eating raw meat, and neither force nor persuasion can make any alteration." The king, Itsa Isack, formerly made a proclamation, by order of the Abuna, that no person should eat raw meat, but he was glad to recal it, for even the priests rose against him.

The people upon the mountain Chirremferrer were glad to relinquish the contest, and give up all their cattle, upon a promise that no one should be killed after the gateway had been opened. This mountain is small, but a good defence against such an enemy as the Amhara, who have little experience in the use of fire-arms. The people of Samen are in general good gunners, but not to be compared with the Tigré soldiers. After storming and plundering, we marched down to a small winding valley, where we encamped. There not being more than forty-six trophies produced before the Ras, he was very ill-tempered, saying he had lost more men than the enemy, and ordering those who were advancing with their captives to be beaten by the

Gaffaries from the front of his tent. Here every one began to live upon his own plunder, and no one ate with the Ras except myself.

At this place we were obliged to feed our horses and mules upon *gulliver* [straw], which is but poor food upon a march, unless it is good *taff gulliver*, which is excellent, and much resembles hay. In the Tigré language it is called *arser*. The inhabitants have no notion however of making hay, in any part of the country, though they might procure some stacks if they thought proper. The piece of meadow ground I had at Chelicut produced me, in the month of October, a large rick of good hay, though I had always a plentiful crop of green grass the whole year round, having a stream of water from above that ran in any direction in which I chose to turn it. I found the hay agree much better with my cattle, during the rains, but no one followed my example, thinking their custom best. Both horses and mules in all parts of Abyssinia are crammed, by those that can afford it, every three days, with a large lump of rock-salt, which is first pounded and mixed with a little water, so as to make it into a lump. Many of the Amhara will cram their horses with barley-flour and honey mixed together, but the pagan Galla feed their horses with milk, though the common food of horses

in the Christian countries is barley. Oats grow wild, and nothing is thought of them.

March 2nd. We left Chirremferrer and pursued our march, sometimes having to climb up very steep mountains. The Ras and the king were often obliged to dismount, while the people were in continual danger of falling from the sides of the steep mountains, which we had to traverse round; numbers of horses, mules, and asses, were thrown from off the precipices by the crowd, and dashed to pieces, and I lost five asses, with all their loading, chiefly consisting of honey and flour. I had the additional misfortune to lose a bag of powder and shot, gun-screws, and other useful articles, as well as my bed and a sanga's hide, which happened to be upon one of the asses.

Notwithstanding the badness of the roads, the Worari found their way in all directions, not a village remained unburned, nor was an animal of any kind left to the poor owners, who fled for their lives. We encamped in the district of Arwozen, which always belongs to a Mahomedan chief, the inhabitants being chiefly Mahomedans. At this time Ras Guebra had placed a favourite chief over it; but it by right belonged to Bashaw Abdalla, whom he kept in chains upon Amba Hai. Here some people, who had met the Ras

at Chirremferrer, and to whom he had given a *tubbuck* [an officer with an escort] to keep the Worari from plundering their town, came in with their tribute, consisting of cattle, cloths, and gold, and acknowledged him their ruler, and not Ras Guebra. The Worari do not like this peaceable work, though numbers of them are killed daily, when engaged in burning and plundering.

It is perhaps proper that I should here give some description of the Worari. They consist of different bodies under no particular command, into which they form themselves as chance directs; but they are all soldiers belonging to the different chiefs, as well as to the Ras or king. So many of one mess or party will go foraging for their commanders one day, while the others look after the baggage, if they have any, which is seldom the case, unless they have got it by plunder; and their women, while the men are plundering, cut from trees boughs enough to make a *goja*. I once went with my servants and a party of the Worari upon one of their foraging parties, merely to experience their nature, but the Ras, upon hearing of it, was considerably alarmed, and begged me never to repeat it.

It is a common custom, in all parts of Abyssinia, for the inhabitants of the villages to have *gudgauds*, large pits under-ground, plastered

within with cow-dung and mud, and having the mouth very narrow, some of which are made to hold forty or fifty *churns* of corn, between three and four hundred English bushels. These *gudgauds* are not only made near the villages and towns, but also in the open fields, and, when an invasion is expected, the corn and other valuables are put into them, and the mouths very carefully covered, first with spars laid close together, so that no earth may fall through; after which the part above the spars is filled with earth to bring it upon a level with the adjoining ground. Should the spot happen to be upon ploughed land, then the whole is ploughed over and over again to conceal the mouth of the *gudgaud;* if upon any other ground, it is made to appear like the ground about it; or, if near the town or village, wood-ashes and rubbish are thrown over it to give it the appearance of a dunghill: but, as this custom has prevailed for many years, and wars are so frequent in all parts, the Worari have become so well acquainted with the mode of finding these hiding-places, that they scarcely ever escape their obvervation. The way they begin to work is as follows. After destroying a village, or finding it deserted by the inhabitants, they form into different parties, and, keeping in a close body, begin to sing their own warlike songs,

stamping and going on in a regular pace, keeping time with their song, and throwing their shields over their heads, and holding their spears close to the end of the shaft with the bright glittering blades in the air, turning about at times in a lively way, as if they were not in search of any thing, but dancing and jumping for their pastime. I always thought this a beautiful sight. In this manner they continue until they find the ground sound hollow under their feet, when they lay their shields in a circle round the spot, and every one sets-to with both hands, as eager as hyænas after their prey; they soon claw out all the earth, break in the rafters, and then begin to fill their skins or bags: if they suspect any danger from the natives being in ambuscade near the place, to come upon them unarmed, they put down two people at a time into the pit, till every one has got his load, those above keeping a good look-out. After all are well loaded they take no farther care for their common safety, but set off to the camp in a disorderly manner, which gives the inhabitants an opportunity to kill those who fall tired by the way. In general there is more blood shed in Abyssinia among these straggling parties of Worari than in their regular battles.

I have heard Mr. Pearce say that, when in Edjow, in 1807, he was once left in the *gudguud*, filling his

bag, when a body of Galla horse made a charge on the Worari, killing a great number, and driving the rest to the side of the mountain close by, where they held their ground against the horse, until happily for him a reinforcement by chance came from the camp. During the whole affair he sat, with his eyes towards the entrance of the *gudgaud*, with his blunderbuss cocked and pointed; till at last the horsemen retreated, and his comrades' shouts were distinctly heard, when, to his great joy, he soon heard the tramp of their feet over his head, and the next minute the cry of, "Pearce, are you full? we have driven them to the devil, but they have cut a great many of us up!"

March 3rd. We left Arwozen, and marched over the worst of mountains, as yesterday. The Worari had been ordered not to advance in front of the Fit-aurari, the Ras fearing they would all be cut off by Ras Guebra's army, which had assembled at Bchader, with the view, not of giving battle, which they dared not hazard, but of watching the motions of the Worari, and taking revenge on them. In the afternoon we reached the top of a high mountain, extremely cold, but having no snow upon it. The ridge of this mountain joins Bchader, and here we encamped, on a plain that extends along the top of the

mountain for a great distance. This mountain, as well as other mountains in Samen, has numbers of the curious trees called *genvarar*, that appear at a distance like naked men. The people well never cut them, owing to a superstitious prejudice they entertain that something bad would in consequence befal them. I seldom saw any of these trees above eight feet high. It is as well, foolish as it may appear, for me to explain the superstitious notions they entertain about these trees, or trunks, as they have no boughs. They say that these trees contain evil spirits, which have been cast out of human beings, and, while they are not disturbed by being cut down, they neither enter nor trouble any one, but when cut down they again enter into some person out of revenge, though it is believed not in general into those who cut them down. This tree yields a milky substance, which is used by way of ink, for the purpose of writing charms, to be worn on any part of the body as a cure for those who are possessed by evil spirits, and to prevent their entering those who are not previously tormented with them. I have known people send a person from Antàlo and Chelicut, when any of their family has been ill with a lingering sickness, to fetch the milk or a piece of the *genvarar* from the mountains of Samen.

This day a great number of our tired asses and people were captured by the troops of Ras Guebra, who had been dogging the rear as they passed Behader without our *dugin* observing them. *Dugin* is the name of the rear-guard of an army, the principal chiefs daily taking the command of it in their turns. It enters the camp when nearly dark, and appears in as regular order as their discipline admits before the Ras's tent, where the chief dismounts and makes his obeisance at a great distance, and then marches alone up to the Ras, and reports to him that all is safe within the bounds of the camp. He afterwards retires to his own quarters, unless he should be asked to supper, which seldom happens unless he be a great favourite.

The manner in which the Abyssinians encamp is, I think, worthy of notice. When encamped on a plain, which very rarely occurs in an enemy's country, the whole scene has a somewhat orderly appearance, though, at the best of times, it cannot be called regular. The Fit-aurari, with the advanced guard, always encamps three or four miles in front of the main camp, their tents being pitched with their front facing the way they have to march. The king, or Ras, is always stationed in the centre of the camp, in general upon the highest spot; his *buggerund* and chief *blitin-*

gatore, his head secretary and treasurer, are in front of his tent, at a short distance, his own household and horses in the rear, and on the sides of the tent and round the whole the soldiers' *gojas* are built in a circle, from the hinder part of the *blitingatore's* camp, where there is left a small entrance. All the other chiefs are encamped round about, so that their camps nearly join each other. Every chief has a large square tent with long lines; no one makes his *goja* within their length; their soldiers are encamped round them in a circle, and the horses and mules are tied with ropes made of cow's hide, which go round the neck of the animal. A small hole is dug in the ground, as far down as the hand from the elbow can reach, and a handful of grass or straw is fastened to the end of the rope, and then put into the hole to the bottom. They then fill up the hole with earth and stones, and beat it well down, which will more than resist the strength of the animal, in case he should take fright. This method the Abyssinians prefer to a stake, or any other substitute.

March 3rd. We marched from this place a little before sunrise, and, after descending the mountain, which is not so bad on this side as on the side we ascended, we got upon what is reckoned a good road in this country. The

Worari had again been ordered, by the beat of the drum, not to advance in front of the Fit-aurari. As we approached Inchetkaub, flocks of priests came out to meet the Ras in their holy garments, and holding their crosses uncovered. They caused the Fit-aurari to stop and not advance a step farther, until they had seen the Ras, and, as the front of the army approached them, they held up their crosses, forbidding any that were Christians to pass them. Accordingly the chiefs, with their divisions, turned aside and halted. The Ras, on coming up, alighted from his mulę and walked up in front of the priests, and made a bow to the cross, but would not give ear to what they had to say, telling them merely, that he would not harm their capital, but make it his residence. The king Tecla Gorgis passed by them with more haughtiness, and never so much as stopped his mule, but called out, "Take down your crosses, and cover them up," which order they did not obey. The Ras ordered by beat of drum not to plunder or burn any part of the town, but commanded that every chief should have such separate quarters as he should think proper to point out; and we marched in as if we were marching into Adowa or Antàlo. The women met the army in gangs, beating drums, dancing, and singing in praise of the

Badinsah, to this effect:—"Badinsah has ten thousand trophies, while Guebra is hung upon the mountain."

The Ras entered Ras Guebra's premises. His wives, who had put themselves under the protection of the priests, were taken from them by force and brought to the Ras. The king had a part of the premises for himself and train, some symptoms of whose treachery had been plainly pointed out to the Ras, in his having sent and received private messages from Ras Guebra, then in the mountain Amba Hai; upon this orders were privately given by the Ras to his favourite petty chiefs, who by turns kept guard every night round his tent when in camp, to look strictly into the king's motions, but as if they took no particular notice. The Ras directed his secretary to collect all the chiefs under him in his tent, and he did not enter a house that night, but had his tent pitched within the walls, in front of the great *aderrash*, a long thatched house, which was occupied by the Ras's *abbuzers*, cooking-women, maize-carriers, &c., and pointed out different quarters for the chiefs in waiting. At supper, the ladies belonging to Ras Guebra were all presented to the Ras, I being present, but no person besides. The Ras said very little to any of them, except the oldest favourite wife of Ras

Guebra, with whom he discoursed upon the continual treachery of her husband towards him. Ras Guebra kept more than sixty women, but not more than thirty three appeared this evening at supper, the others having made their escape from mistrust of the Ras, and gone to Amba Hai. After supper they all returned to their separate apartments within the walls. One beautiful Galla, whom Ras Guebra had brought up and educated under a priest of great learning, the old gentleman recalled, and gave in care to Abbuzer Tisral, the head-cook.

The next day, the Ras ordered the drum to beat, to warn every body to be careful of their provisions and what they had plundered, as they would not quit this station for many days. The great Lent, or fast, had begun several days before; I used to eat meat, being allowed it on account of illness. The *wotada* will drink water when upon a march, but not eat anything until the proper hour, which is, when your shade is nine times the length of your foot in the afternoon; in other fasts it is more.

Fit-aurari Suddal being upon the march for Walkayt, I obtained permission to go with him for a few days, and returned with the Gusmati Woldi Comfu.

March 6th. We left Inchetkaub early in the

morning with not more than two hundred soldiers, without any baggage, having previously sent every thing forward. We halted for the night in a wilderness upon the skirts of the holy land of Waldubba, leaving the Segudda to our left. Before day-light we again set off, and, after marching through the wildest roads, arrived about midday at a small village in Walkayt, where Fit-aurari took some refreshment, it being Saturday, on which day, as well as on Sundays, they do not fast, but eat no flesh. When we had refreshed ourselves we again set off, and marched though numerous cotton plantations, watered from different small streams that run from the mountains. At night, after dark, we arrived at Arder Kummet, the capital of Walkayt.

Woldi Comfu was at supper, but the moment he was told of his brother's arrival he caused his hall to be cleared to make room for the visiters, as several people belonging to the Ras's household were with the Fit-aurari only for a visit. I was the first introduced to him, and, though he had never seen me before, he seated me upon his own sofa, while all others, as well as his brother, were seated, as is customary, on the floor. After supper there was a great quantity of maize presented. He hearing that the Ras had required his presence at his camp in less than ten days, nothing

but bustle was heard and seen about his household; for it is usual for the soldiers, in all parts of Abyssinia, before their masters take the field, or when they go to camp only for a visit, to come before them in turn and shew their activity with their arms, and boast of what they have done and will do. I slept in the same *adderrash* in which we ate our supper, while the Gusmati retired to his women's apartment. Next morning a sheep was killed for me, every one being fasters except a young boy, nephew to the Gusmati, who ate upon a side-table with me.

A Tigré chief, son to Ito Cofta, had come purposely to kill an elephant, which the youngsters in Abyssinia in general do, to distinguish themselves in their first setting off, and their next exploit is to kill a Galla, or a Shangalla; for, until a youth has done this, he has but little to say in company. Cofta having made known his intentions, the Gusmati ordered him a guide. Walkayt is the northernmost boundary of Abyssinia west of the Tacazzé. The neighbouring people north and west are Shangalla, or common Negroes, who inhabit this country in different tribes far to the north and west; their language differs in almost every tribe, and they are by far the mildest-tempered race I ever saw. Ras Welled Selassé has always near his person a great number

of them, who are educated by a schoolmaster, whom he keeps on his premises to teach the slaves of all kinds. The tribes bordering on the territory of the Christians are continually hunted and tormented by them; they inhabit the most desert parts, eat elephants, wild buffalo, camelopard, rhinoceros, rats, snakes, frogs, &c. They are hunted by the Christians, who kill the old men if taken, and make slaves of the young. In and about Walkayt there are numbers of Shangalla who have become familiar with the Christians and Mahometans, and who in the rainy season cultivate spots in the adjoining desert, and sow the grain called *marshella*, under the protection of the Gusmati of Walkayt.

Cofta set out in the evening, for the purpose of shooting an elephant, with some gunners. In Walkayt, Ras-el-feel, and Shiré, on the east of the Tacazzé, the elephant-hunters have large and long matchlocks for the purpose, which they lend to those who want to kill, but the owner receives some teeth for the loan. Cofta, being too young to handle the spear, preferred a matchlock.

Next morning, the Gusmati lent me one of his mules to go with some of his Shangalla horsemen to see them kill an elephant. His nephew, a boy not more than ten years of age, went with us,

and we were accompanied by several gunners besides my own servants. The Shangalla were eight in number, with four horses; four of them had spears and shields, the other four had swords such as come from Sennaar, sharp on both edges. On our road we passed through the desert which is nearly covered with thorny bushes. I observed in several places Shangalla ploughing the sandy earth against the rains, as in general there are a few days' rain in all parts of Abyssinia in the month of April, when they sow the grain. These Shangalla were now preparing for what is called *marshella*. Two women, naked, with straps over their shoulders and holding by both hands, dragged the plough, while a man steered it. About three in the afternoon we got sight of a number of elephants and rhinoceroses; when the eight men got upon their four horses, one upon the saddle, with his spear and shield, and another behind with a sword, which is very sharp towards the point. About a span and a half above this they have a piece of hide wrapped round the blade, fitting the right hand that the edges may not cut them. Some have a cord twisted round the blade, which serves them always when they go a-hunting; if hide is used they want a fresh piece every time, because, when dry, they cannot get it off without cutting it, and to soak it in

water would spoil the blade, though some of them prefer this trouble, on account of the good and secure hold they have of it. We were ordered by the Shangalla to sit down all together, and not to fire a gun or make the least noise; some of the elephants* were eating the trees about two hundred yards below us. The hunters then rode off in different directions, and selected the elephant they found furthest from the herd. The horses being used to the sport, the men ride at full speed quite in front of the elephant they mean to kill, when they bring the horse up suddenly, and if possible the spearsman will strike his spear into the eye, or as nearly so as he can. Whether he strikes the animal or not he turns his horse quickly, and keeps cantering round the beast, which turns as the horse goes round him. After some time the poor beast becomes tired and careless about turning round any more, but either stands still or walks straight on; then the swordsman, when close to the elephant's hind legs, drops off over the horse's tail, and with both hands gives the beast a cut a little above

* The almost proverbial sagacity of the elephant is as much celebrated in Abyssinia as in the other parts of the world which it inhabits; and many are the stories related of its subtlety and "half-reasoning" faculties: indeed it seems to be considered by the natives as a species of superior being.—*Editor.*

the heel. The great sinew, which appears more like fat than sinew, being cut, the animal has no longer the power to stand, when they spear him or cut him with knives, as they choose. The teeth they take to their masters, who exchange them with the Mahomedans for articles brought from the sea, and the Shangalla cut the flesh into strings and dry it for *quanter*.

The Walkayt Shangalla, as well as the Tacazzé, are not quite so woolly-headed, flat-nosed, and thick-lipped, as the Abawi Shangalla, beyond the Abawi; neither are they so mild-tempered as the the former. After the sport was over, we mounted our mules, and rode towards home by the same road we came. When dark, we pitched our little camp under a large *seggla* tree, and had plenty of provisions and maize.

Early in the morning we set out again, and about twelve arrived at the Gusmati's house at Arder-Rummet. Here we found all in a bustle as we had left it, getting ready their provisions for the camp. The Gusmati Woldi Comfu, though very civil to me, behaved differently to others, and had indeed an extremely sullen look.

Walkayt is a country not much esteemed for its corn and cattle; the latter they bring from Tigré, Temben, and other parts east of the Ta-

cazzé, and exchange them for cotton-cloths, which are more numerous here than in other parts of Abyssinia, excepting Shiré.

March 13th. I left Arder-Rummet with the army of the Gusmati Woldi Comfu, our road being exactly the same as the one I had come with Fit-aurari Suddal. We encamped in a wild woody place within the boundaries of Waldubba. The next morning a great number of monks joined in our march from a church called Kudus Michael, as they wanted to see the Ras. One of these monks walked by the side of my mule nearly all the road, and told me abominable lies, which I pretended to believe, as the weak-minded people really do. He said he was related to the ancient kings of the race of Meneleck, and that he had formerly been very wealthy, but, being quite averse from the pleasures and sins of earth, "I gave all," said he, "to the poor and turned monk, being a *dingle* [a virgin]. When I came to Waldubba, I joined in the club of monks, where we used to drink *tsug* and *taller** once every month, but, thinking this too much indulgence for a sinful soul, I forsook them and turned *bartone*. On my first setting out, in the midst of the wilderness, living upon nothing but leaves

* *Tsug* is maize, and taller *sowa*, in the Amhara language.

and seed, I found myself very weak and tired, when a large lion, with a very long mane, came towards me. God had given me courage not to fear, and he came, and rubbed his sides against me, as if he wanted me to get upon his back, which I did, and he took me where he pleased. When he stopped, I alighted and gathered leaves, herbs, and roots, for my subsistence, while he went to kill something for himself. All the *bartones* ride on lions," continued he, "as a look from us tames the wildest beasts." All this palaver I heard, and at the same time thought he deserved the whip I held in my hand, but dared not show the least sign of using it, as I wished to do. I was glad when I had got rid of him, for he bothered me so much about Jerusalem that I was heartily tired, it being a place as I told him I had never seen, but he would not believe me. It became dark before we could reach Inchetkaub; we therefore encamped close to the church Abbagarva, about two miles from the camp, and the next morning went into the town.

The Gusmati Woldi Comfu having had about two hours' private conversation with the Ras, it was determined that he should return to his own country, and he set out the next day, for what reason no one knew. The Ras's army was more

numerous than it had been in any war in which I had ever yet been engaged, though they have no regular mode of numbering their troops, either as regards the men or the chiefs. It was supposed that there were more than fifty thousand Tigré soldiers, and twenty thousand Amharas; the latter commanded by Asgas Sedit and the Cannasmash Gabrew, brother to the Gusmarsh Ackly Marro. Gabrew is the son of the Cannasmash Cofta; Marro is the son of Ackly, a Gavverry farmer, but born of the same mother. Marro is the youngest, and, being braver than his brother Gabrew, soon drove him out of the district, which he had no right to do, Gabrew being the lawful heir; who fled for protection to Ras Welled Selassé, by whom he was well treated during his residence with him, and who had given him his niece Ozoro Sarlu to wife.

The Ras had sent and received messages from Guxo, who was then on the borders of Lasta, and had driven Ras Ilo to his mountain Selahferre; but, the last messenger not returning as soon as was expected, the drum was beat for all to be ready to quit Inchetkaub by the holyday Baler Mariam, the 21st of the month.

March 17th. The Gusmati Woldi Comfu left our camp well and in good health, but the next

day, on his march, he died upon his mule so suddenly that he never uttered a word: his death caused a general cry in the camp, which is not common when an army is in the field.

The beautiful Galla girl I have before mentioned, given to the care of Abbuzer Welleta Tisral, was stolen, and taken by force from the Abbuzer's apartment, while she was attending upon the Ras at supper, by Shum Temben Sarlu, nephew to the Ras. The old gentleman, on being made acquainted with the affair, sent for the girl, who by this time had been returned, and asked in what manner she had been taken from his premises. She said, "While I was sitting by myself in the *wats hate*, [cook-house,] the Abbuzer having gone with all the women to carry the victuals to supper, a chief came in with several people, who caught hold of me, and carried me away to a tent; and, after passing the night with me, he sent me back with only one man, who ran off after he had come with me half-way. This nephew, though the Ras had shown him many favours, by forgiving him for rebellion, had done the same three times before with different women belonging to the Ras. The Ras desired the people about the premises not to talk about the matter to any one, adding that as his nephew had again shamed him it was

impossible for him to put the *Wodde Mammen* (meaning son of a lewd woman) to death, as he deserved.

Next morning the Ras put the girl upon one of his own mules, and sent her, with all her attendants and five or six more of Ras Guebra's women, to Amba Hai with a guard, as far as the foot of the mountain, from which Subhart, the regular messenger to and from Ras Guebra, took them up to the mountain, with something similar to a flag of truce. Meanwhile the drum was beat to proclaim that all districts and land of any description, belonging to Shum Temben Sarlu, were taken from him by order of the Ras, and given, (naming the different portions) to Palambarus Toclu, Woldi Garva Quontarte, and Ito Musgrove of Basanate; in consequence, the soldiers of Sarlu, knowing they should never get their pay, and seeing no source whence it could come, quitted him, and enlisted with the new chiefs of their country.

Sarlu, by this transaction, became sensible of his bad conduct, and sent for me. I at first refused to comply, but his continual messengers and the former intimacy we had kept up, at last induced me to go and see him; I therefore took an opportunity of paying him a visit unknown to the Ras. I found him sitting upon a

sheepskin, and indeed he looked very sheepish himself. After the usual compliments of the country, "What false report is this?" said he; "can you not persuade the Ras not to give ear to my enemies? It is on his account that I have so many." I interrupted him, by saying, "Sarlu, for God's sake hold your tongue, for I have little time to spend with you, but I will tell you what is witnessed against you;" and, after repeating word for word what I had heard both the Galla girl and others tell the Ras in my presence, I said, "I myself should only tell you a lie if I said I do not believe you guilty of the crime laid to your charge." Upon which he began to tear off the hair from his temples, the same as he would have done if a relation had died that moment in his presence. He cried in a lamentable tone, "What an unlucky soul I am! I can do nothing but what is known directly." I answered, "You are very lucky, for if you were in the hands of any one else but Ras Welled Selassé. they would not have left you your head to tear, as you are now doing like a fool;" and upon this I left him. In the morning I sent every body out of the Ras's presence and told him the whole story, for fear my visit should be made known to him by some other person. He said, "Guebra Massea, his father, was

my youngest brother, by our father Kefla Yasous, though not by my mother Welleta Sian: before he died I visited him, when very ill, and he caused me to swear by the bones of his father, Kefla Yasous, that I would have the same affection for Sarlu, his son, as I would have for Manassey's or Debbib's children, who were my brothers by one mother; after such an oath, how can I hurt the *Zear Wodde Mammen?*"

March 21st. The Amhara Fit-aurari Guebra Amlac and Chellica Comfu marched, and encamped about eight miles from the town. The Ras would not stir that day through respect to the Virgin Mary, it being her holyday. The drum was beat, as an injunction not to burn or hurt any part of the town upon quitting it, under pain of death.

Next day the Ras marched to the place where the Fit-aurari had been encamped, who had quitted and encamped a little farther on. Here the messenger of Ras Guxo arrived, and as it appeared the Ras had taken into consideration that if he entered Guxo's territories it would be the destruction of Lasta and Ras Ilo, his particular ally, it was settled that the Ras should do as he thought proper with the province of Samen, and all other districts belonging to Ras Guebra,

which extended to the Ungarrau; that Guxo was to retire immediately from Lasta, and return to Ras Ilo all the cattle that had been taken from him by his army; and that Ras Ilo should possess the districts in Daunt and Wadler belonging to the Gusmarsh Asserrat, then in chains upon the mountain Mokkina. This treaty being settled, agreeably to the wishes of all the chiefs except the Amhara Cannasmash Gabrew and Asgas Sedit, who were not put by it into possession of their former territories, the drummers beat throughout the country of Wogara Bellesart, to warn the inhabitants to bring in their tribute of cattle, gold, &c. before the expiration of three days, during which time the Ras remained on the mountain that forms the east side of the valley Shoader, a most beautiful country, belonging to Ozoro Setches, the Ras's first wife, daughter of the Gusmarsh Errocklis, brother to Ras Guebra. This district belonged to her by birth. Several springs and a beautiful stream run through the valley, the banks of which are covered with vines, peaches, limes, and other garden fruits; *tringo*, a favourite fruit, is also very plentiful. The drum had beat several times, to warn all persons not to enter the valley upon pain of being flogged round the camp, notwithstanding which the *wotada*, having got sight of the ripe peaches and grapes,

before the Ras could be informed of it, the whole valley was swarming, as if with the devouring locust, and in a few hours not a bunch of grapes nor a peach was to be seen, which greatly aggravated the Ras, as he had expected to have his table supplied with them every day during his stay.

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Coffin's Narrative concluded—Expedition to collect the Income of Wogara, &c.—Lofty Mountain of Limalms—The River Ungarrau—Arrival at Gondar—The king's house—Description of the town—Singing Women—Wine—Fish—Mr. Coffin receives a Visit from an old Servant—Jews—Priests—Church of Quosquom—Building Materials—Painting—Return to Inchetkaub—Deputation of Priests sent by Guebra to intercede for him with the Ras—Intrigues of Guebra and Tecla Gorgis—Mountain of Sankar Bar—Attacked and taken by the Ras—Slaughter of the enemy—Devastations of the conquerors—Mountain of Amba Hai, Guebra's strong-hold—The government of Samen given to Guebra Michael—The Gama—Interchange of presents between the Ras and Ras Guebra—Trial of an English cannon—Story of a Turk.

APRIL 1st. The Ras dispatched Fit-aurari Guebra Amlac and Chellica Comfu, with the Amhara Cannasmash Gabrew and Asgas Sedit, to collect the income of Wogara, Mariam Wor, &c., and at the same time commanded them not let their men pass the Ungarrau, under pain of having their commands taken from them. I obtained permission to accompany this expedition, and we marched to Wogara. The people offered resistance, but soon found that they should have the worst, for at first they thought our army consisted of the Amhara Asgas Sedit and Gabrew only, but, upon hearing the cry of "*Goverser*

Badinsah!" they were struck with a panic and fled in all directions, while our troops plundered their villages. Next day, we began our march over Limalms, a very high mountain, but nothing to compare with Amba Hai, or the mountains about Sugernet: from the top of Limalms you can see all the plain country of Gojam, and round about to Emfras, and the mountains beyond the lake Tzana. This mountain is worse to go down the west side than it is to go up on the east; and, our party being very numerous, and in each other's way, we were about three hours before we got to the bottom: our march still lay over small hills, ascending and descending, and about four o'clock in the afternoon we came to Mariam Wor, a small river, in this part running over a rocky bottom and having steep rocks on each side. Here our Worari plundered the premises of Palambarus Devlo, a general in the service of Guxo; there were many disputes between the Fit-aurari and Amhara, who had been the occasion of this act, and consequently of breaking the treaty with Guxo. The Amhara said, "How could Guxo have to do with it, or what business had a servant of his to reside in the territories of Ras Guebra?

The news of our approach had many days past been in Gondar, and, before we left Inchetkaub, the

king, Itsa Guarlu, had taken all his property and gone to the *giddam* island, Carretta Wolletta, in the lake Tzana; indeed all great people in office under Guxo had done the same, fearing the tyranny of Tecla Gorgis, and supposing that he would be again placed upon the throne. Next morning we marched to the Ungarrau, and about twelve o'clock encamped close by an old bridge, formerly built by the Portuguese in the reign of king Fasil, for the purpose of crossing the river in the rainy season. It is but a poor building, formed of irregular-sized stones and mortar. I was told by an Amhara priest that there are several of these bridges, called Fasil Dilde; this one over the upper Ungarrau, another over the lower Ungarrau, one over the Rib, one over the Moghetch, two over the Abawi, and one over the Kar; this latter was never finished. Although these are at the present day considered as great works of antiquity by the Abyssinians, they would be thought nothing of in the meanest part of Europe.

Here we had nothing but disturbances: the Cannasmash Gabrew and Asgas Sedit had entered Gondar contrary to the orders of the Ras, and, knowing they had nothing to lose by this disobedience, they set-to and plundered all the premises of the Gusmarsh Marro of Dembea,

who was the present commander in Gondar, but had gone with Guxo's army against Ras Ilo; and they likewise took the property of several others, who, they said, were their enemies. The Tigré troops wanted to do the same, but several being severely punished by the Fit-aurari and Chellica Comfu, this soon put a stop to their proceedings.

I could only see a part of the east side of the town, where I was stationed, but from a hill about a quarter of a mile from our camp I could survey the whole. The king's house, called Itsa Gamb, (king's tower), stood in the middle upon a height, and looked more like a Portuguese church than a royal palace. The king does not live in it at present, nor has he for many years past; the doors are all broken down, and the whole is very much out of repair, though within the walls Itsa Guarlu had built several decent apartments, besides the one he lived in when here. According to the Abyssinian way of building, the town is scattered about over a vast tract of land, in general high with small hillocks; every part takes its name from either the church, market, or people, that occupy the ground. Chegge Bate is a large piece of ground, spacious enough to build a town upon, from which no one, if even guilty of murder, can be taken, it being the residence of the *chegge* or head-bishop of Abyssinia; the Abuna's premi-

ses have the same respect paid to them. The part of the town occupied by Mahomedans, though many Christians are intermixed with them, is called Salem Ga. Ardervaohi is the name of the main public road, that leads to the king's house, where they hold the market; the same road leads to the *wock-gavier*, [gold-market,] where they exchange gold for salt, and no one dare weigh the gold but the proper persons in office, who are always silversmiths, and of whom I shall give an account in another place. If Gondar were built in a regular manner after the mode of building in Europe, one eighth of the ground would be sufficient for its population. The houses are all thatched, but, on account of the badness of the clay, they are obliged to thatch their walls likewise, to prevent their being washed down by the rain; while, in several parts of Abyssinia, the clay and stones that the walls are built with will resist the rains for a number of years. The whole town is lined with *wanzatra* trees, which hide the houses from the view; one part especially, and the only part I have been in, which was by night, is so thickly covered with those trees that you cannot see a house before you get within the trees that surround it. This part of the town goes by the name of Turkouch Minder, which name arose from the Sennaar troops

having been quartered there, when in the service of the king, Arlem Segued Yassu, (meaning "the world bows down to Yassu") or Yassu Tarlack the great.

In the day time our camp was full of the Amhara women, who used to join in gangs, the girls in one and grown women in another, singing to the sound of a drum, which a woman beat at both ends, and carried slung with a string about her neck. They sang the following song: "Give the Badinsah breeches, and he is a lion: where is the man that will dare to hold his shield to him?"—"Give him breeches" merely means when he is up and dressed he is ready, and no one dare face him. I had many acquaintances here, who brought me as much wine and brandy as I and my servants could drink, and fine peaches and grapes were very plentiful, it being just the season for them.

The wine is very good, but what we make in Enderta is much the same; it will not keep more than three weeks, or a month, before it becomes sour, arising from the want of proper vessels to keep it in, as they have nothing better than earthen jars for the purpose, and these are not glazed within. I have kept wine the whole year round in English bottles. The brandy they make is very strong, and distilled through a

hollow cane, called *shambacco*, from the husks and stones of the grapes, after the liquor is pressed from them. Great quantities come daily to town at this time of the year from Corder Emfras, the grape country. Grapes are found in almost all parts of Abyssinia, but no country produces so much as Emfras, owing to an ancient custom of the inhabitants following the wine business. Here tribute is paid to the king and the Abuna. Every *dass* of wine pays a jar yearly to the king, as they enter Gondar to the market, and every other article that enters the market for sale pays likewise a portion to the king's officers; butter, pepper, greens of every kind, wood, corn, and cattle, are exempt from duty. It is the same in all other capitals of Abyssinia, such as Adowa and Antàlo. The rules of the custom-house, and duties upon merchants and merchandize, will be seen in a subsequent page.

Fish are abundant, especially those called *ambazza*, an ugly fish, though very good eating, being very fat, having scarcely any small bones, and being without scales like the eel; its skin is very thick. There is another scaly and very good-looking fish, called *barki*, but not so sweet as the foregoing, and full of small bones. This fish, as well as a smaller one, called *lombe*, and which resembles the English gudgeon, are very

good eating, and both are abundant in all the rivers of Abyssinia. The *ambazza* is also found in most of the large rivers. The inhabitants of Gondar make *quanter* of them, by drying them with scarcely any salt, in which state they will keep a long time. In the month of August, on the first of which begins the fast called Filsetter, Blessed Virgin, the youths go to Dembea, with large sticks in their hands, and, the lake Tzana being at that time overflowed and the water muddy, they kill great quantities of this fish, which they find in the shoal and muddy water. My acquaintances tell me that one *amola*, which is a piece of salt worth the ninth part of a dollar, will buy enough *ambazza* for twenty families' suppers: at that season wine is also very cheap; one *amola* buys a large jar of about six gallons; from the beginning of March to the end of May, you may buy it at this price. At the same season you can buy three *brulys* of brandy, which is about three pints, wine measure, for one *amola*.

My old servant, whom I had discharged, in the beginning of last year, paid me a visit, having heard of me from the townspeople, who visited our camp; he brought his two sons with him, each conducting a girl with a jar of wine. With the little money he had received from me as

wages he had put one of his sons into a small line of business, by trading from Gondar to Sarsar; the other is a deacon belonging to the church Quosquom. I strictly inquired of the former about his manner or custom of trading, and what he dealt in; he told me that two dollars' worth of salt, taken from Gondar, would sell for a *wakeah* and a quarter of gold in Sarsar, and if he kept in good health, and after paying all *bers*, places where they take toll for the passing of salt, in a line of trade common in all parts of Abyssinia, he should often have a *wakeah* left clear upon his return to Gondar. During the rains, he said he went across the lake Tzana, upon a *tonquor* that carries *gesho*, [wood] &c. from Agow Mudda. The *tonquor* is a large raft, with spars laid crosswise upon the top, and mats sewed upon them and round the edges, so that goods and people go from island to island, and across the lake, dry. The common rafts used for crossing the larger rivers in the rainy seasons, such as the Tacazzé, are a very dangerous contrivance; for it often happens that the stream will break the raft, and those upon it are never seen or heard of more. He told me that Sarsar was a large Shangalla town, the capital of the province; that its best buildings were not better than the worst in this place, being all small alike, and in the same shape as the

commonest huts about the towns in Abyssinia. This town is upon the banks of the Abawi, as near as Gondar is to the Ungarrau. When he went all the way by land in the dry season, he said he had to cross the river Abawi three times, as Sarsar lies upon the west bank of the river. Agow Mudda, Gesar, and Devarte, are also capital towns of the Shangalla. The Abawi Ras, or head of the Abawi, rises at Succola, passes through the lake Tzana, and, running again to the south, takes a turn round its head, and again pursues its course north; in this manner it must be crossed three times going from Gondar to Sarsar, which it would be difficult to do in the rainy season.

The Jews, at present, are not numerous in Gondar, as scarcely four hundred can be found in the place. They have a house of prayer at Derfecher Keder Merret.

The priests are numerous in Gondar; every church maintains a great number by means of the land that belongs to it. This land, as in all parts of Abyssinia, is divided into *reams*, equal shares; the head-priests have ten parts, and others of high rank have in proportion, some four, some two, &c. Quosquom is at present the mother church; it is well thatched, and the blue silk with which it is lined, and the large mirrors with

which it was adorned, by the Queen Eligge Mantwaub, the daughter of the Quonquosh, are still in a perfect state. The priests are of opinion that their city is very grand, and they even call it *Cuttermer Arbar arrat Bate er Christian*, meaning the city of forty-four churches.

Quosquom was built by the above-mentioned Yer Eligge Mantwaub, daughter of the Quonquosh, who took the name from the mother of Benecuffa, who was born and lived at Quora, where Benecuffa was also born, whose daughter, Ozoro Hunkeyey, was the mother of Yer Eligge Mantwaub, and also born at Quora, where she gave birth to Eligge Mantwaub. Yassu Tarlack, the husband of Eligge, was also born in the neighbourhood of Quora; and the royal family and court, having removed to that place, were distinguished by the name of Quonquosh, and are called so to this day. After the death of Yassu, Eligge became queen and very rich; she was a very generous and splendid princess, was remarkably fond of white people, and employed several Greeks and Armenians to build the church of Quosquom. In making golden crowns, crosses, cups, &c., for the holy service and the administration of the sacrament, and likewise for silk carpets, cushions, hangings, &c., to complete her church, they say she spent fifty thousand

wakeahs of pure gold; though the edifice is of no better materials than other buildings in the city. As she had no one in her service who could make mortar, this church is built with clay, rough stones, wood, canes, and straw, which are the principal materials for the first buildings in Abyssinia. Yer Eligge Mantwaub had her church built in a way to prevent fire from destroying it, after the manner of Abba Garimur, a church in Tigré.

The church, of an oblong square form, has a flat top, and within it is well plastered with the best clay; it has a kind of portico. The outside is covered with thatch, to preserve the building from being washed down by the rains: a good thatch, done by persons who profess the business in this country, will last for thirty or forty years without wanting repair. They do not thatch with straw, but Nature has provided them with a long strong wiry grass, which grows wild during the rains upon almost all the mountains; it does not become bristly until it is fairly scorched by the sun, and when wet again becomes pliable: they call this grass, *bate sar*, [house-grass]. Quosquom being the most esteemed church in Gondar at the present day, I have been induced to give a fuller account of it.

Nearly one half of the forty-four churches of Gondar have fallen down, and perhaps the reader

will imagine that it would require a great deal of skill, labour, and expense, to rebuild them, supposing them to be nearly on a par with St. Paul's, or Westminster Abbey; but, in order to prevent so erroneous an opinion, I shall point out, in a true and plain manner, the mode adopted, and the materials used, in building what is called a cathedral, in such capitals as Gondar and Antàlo. If a church is to be built, every Christian is ready to carry stones, clay, &c., gratis; and when the king, Ras, chief-priest, or any other individual, intends to build or repair a church, or to erect any large building for his own residence, he first buys, or takes from the poor country people for nothing, canes and grass; for wood he will send to the people of the districts lying near the wood country, or where it is to be procured the best and easiest, and order them to bring it, till sufficient materials are collected for the purpose. To buy the whole of these materials fairly would not cost them more than eighty German crowns. I have been enabled to make with certainty the following calculations from my own experience in building and paying fairly for every thing. Of the *shambacco*, a hollow cane, the material for covering, you can buy one thousand five hundred per dollar, and fifteen thousand for ten dollars, which would be suffi-

cient for any building I have yet seen in the country. Small spars, of different kinds of wood, may be bought at the rate of fifty per dollar, five hundred per ten dollars, and twenty dollars for wood of larger size, for door-ways, &c.; one hundred and sixty boys' and girls' load of grass per dollar, one thousand six hundred per ten dollars. Four builders, if even *Fellashers* [Jews] would cost no more than one dollar each for six days, and twelve days' work, with four workmen, would finish any of their buildings. The thatcher would agree to complete the whole for four dollars, and the remaining eighteen dollars would be sufficient to treat generously the men, women, boys, and girls, neighbours, and all who assisted in mixing the clay and carrying it and stones to the builders, besides *sowa* and *taller*. They in general mix *taff* straw with their clay, to make it hold together, as hair is used in mortar in Europe. Many pious Christians, who can afford it, will go to a great expense in ornamenting one of those churches within, with painting and articles made of gold and silver, and carpets and silks, which are very costly in this country.

Their manner of painting is, I think, very curious: it is as follows. After plastering the wall and smoothing it with clay, they line it, when perfectly dry, with cotton cloth, which is

stuck to the wall by means of a slimy substance made from cow's hide, or from the fruit of the *wanzatra*. Over this cloth they lay a coat of white-wash, made from chalk or lime-stone, first burnt, and then pounded and mixed with water, adding a little of the aforesaid substance with which the cloths are stuck to the wall. They then draw the outline of the picture with charcoal, and afterwards paint it with black paint, which they make by burning hemp-seed nearly to a cinder; they then shade their painting, by strengthening or weakening their colour. They make no colours in the country, except a fine red, which they use for dyeing ivory, and this is made from a wood called *zanen*. All other paints they obtain dry from Arabia; these they grind and mix themselves, and always mix the yolks of eggs and gum-water in their paints of all colours. The paints are ground on a smooth stone, with the yolks and gum-water, and tempered with the same.

The greatest parts of the inhabitants of Gondar differ from the Copts in their religion, although their patriarch was a Copt. No priest is allowed to have a *ream* in any parish of Gondar, unless the same professes the faith of the Echeggei.

April 7th. We left Ungarrau, and marched to Mariam Wor. Next day we marched over

Limalms, several of our people in the rear being killed by the inhabitants of the plundered and burned villages of Wogara, where we encamped for the night. Next day we marched to Shoader, whence the Ras had marched to Inchetkaub; and on the day following we joined the Ras's army, encamped without that town, to which they had just set fire, and were waiting to see the best parts of Ras Guebra's premises consumed to the ground; these were reckoned the most extensive buildings belonging to any governor in Abyssinia.

April 11th. As we had begun our march purposely for the destruction of Behader and Sugernet, a great number of priests, belonging to Waldubba and to the different churches of Samen, met the Ras; Ras Guebra having sent a message by them to intreat the Ras to forgive him his misconduct, and he would wait upon him, with a stone slung about his neck, at Axum, as he had done on former occasions. The Ras, being persuaded by the priests that it was a great sin to shed so much blood, and to ruin the comfort of so many thousands of poor people, merely to revenge himself for the treachery of one man, gave way to their intreaties, and ordered the army to march by the same road we came into Samen, and appointed the day upon which Ras

Guebra should arrive at Axum. The same day a fine horse from Guxo, for his own riding, arrived as a present for the Ras. Guxo had obeyed the Ras's orders, by returning all the cattle that were not killed by the Worari to Ras Ilo, and had put him again in possession of the districts, agreed to in the treaty, and had himself arrived at Deverer-tavor, his capital, in Begemder. At this time messengers arrived from Ras Guebra, telling the Ras that Guebra had declared to them that he had never consented to visit Ras Welled Selassé at Axum, with a stone about his neck, and that this story had been invented by the priests themselves.

This intelligence enraged the Ras so much that he determined to return immediately, and accordingly he dispatched the troops of Enderta, to fetch one of the pieces of cannon brought thither by Mr. Salt. At the same time he had learned from some of Ras Guebra's favourite priests, that the king Tecla Gorgis had occasioned this last piece of deceit in Ras Guebra. It appeared that Tecla Gorgis was vexed with the Ras for not having put him upon the throne, and had contrived to make more mischief by privately sending to Ras Guebra, and telling him he would be guilty of a great folly to come to the Ras, who was so old and feeble that he could

scarcely mount his mule without help; and, that after he had once got beyond the Tacazzé, he would be bound for his not attempting to return; moreover adding, he would, upon his (the king's) arrival at Axum, send and persuade Subegadis to enter into the interior of Tigré. The Ras, on learning this intrigue, kept all in his own breast: and, upon the arrival of the gun and its carriage, with ammunition, &c., which were carried separately, so many men to a wheel, and the same to every separate part belonging to the carriage and ammunition, the gun was slung to a long pole, and a great number of men carried it with great difficulty over the mountains, every chief in his turn taking charge of it day by day. The drum was beat to give notice to all those who had gone to their respective districts to bring a supply of provisions for the use of the army, while it should be without plunder, and to intimate that they must be in camp by Baler Mariam. Tecla Gorgis endeavoured to persuade the Ras not to return, not knowing that he was fully acquainted with what he had practised against him, and, finding his advice neglected, told the Ras that he would return to Axum and there remain until the Ras should return from Samen to Enderta, where he would again meet him; but

the Ras told him that he could not spare Palambarus Toclu, for without him he could not be provided for. The king made several other excuses to get to Axum, but the old Ras at last insisted upon his returning with him, and ordered his chiefs to look strictly after him; and he would not even allow him to send his wife, Ozoro Cottser, to Axum or Waldubba, as he had before promised.

Next day, we left the banks of the Tacazzé, and marched to Salumte, a district belonging to Ito Guebra Kedan, and the drum had been beaten to forbid plundering, Guebra Kedan being the husband of Ozoro Sarlu, the Ras's niece.

We marched next day for Behader. Ras Guebra had put people to work to stop the pass up the mountain, called Sankar Bar, which was always impassable in the ascent, if a few muskets were placed at the top to defend the passage; but he had now caused rocks to be broken down in the narrow cuts, so that it had become a mere precipice, and the first salute we had was a whole volley of musketry, when several of the Fit-aurari's people were killed. We were about three miles in the rear of the Fit-aurari when we heard the report of these muskets, which echoed along the mountains. The cry of "*Badinsah!*" was soon heard from all quarters, and though the rocks

were almost perpendicular and so high that it appeared impossible to ascend them for nearly three miles above the valley, yet the soldiers climbed up with the greatest agility and courage imaginable, though many were hurt, and I saw one fall from a great height, who broke his neck, but never dropped his spear or shield from his hands.

In about an hour a great many were seen upon the top, at both sides of the mountain, and appeared like monkeys; we could scarcely hear their shouts, but could perfectly see their actions, though they could not be seen from this distance by the troops of Ras Guebra, who were defending the pass against the Fit-aurari. I stood by the Ras, who had been obliged, as well as myself, to alight from his mule and climb up the rocks on our hands and feet, every now and then looking at the soldiers, and wondering how they ascended so nimbly. The Ras remarked, "These Wojjerats and Agows are devils; not a man of Tigré could equal the worst of them for climbing up the rocks."—"Ah," said one of the Ras's *duggefys* (a man who always walks by the side of his mule to give ease to his legs, or arms, which he puts upon his shoulder, being a Tigré man) "if we had been obliged to climb up the rocks to get at the bee-hives, for their honey, from our infancy,

as the Wojjerats and Agows do, we should be as good climbers as they are;" at which the old gentleman laughed, and kept looking first upon one side of the mountain, and then upon the other, watching the proceedings of the soldiers, who were running along the narrow ridges like Welsh goats. The firing was still kept up by the soldiers of Guebra defending the pass against the Fit-aurari, until they were entirely surrounded, as they had never dreamt that it was possible to ascend by any other passage than the one they defended; they had therefore kept no look-out upon any other quarter than the narrow passage. But, when they found themselves surrounded, they were struck with a sudden panic, and the confusion into which they fell was lamentable, as they plainly saw that their enemies were double their own number. Scarcely a man escaped, as the Wojjerats kill all that fall in their power, both old and young. The Agows, if none of their own blood is spilt, will spare life, making those prisoners whom they take; but when one of their own party drops, they will revenge him even upon an infant. Hundreds of Ras Guebra's soldiers dropped their arms and descended the pass, to get into the Fit-aurari's army for quarter, but numbers were killed in the attempt by the comrades of those who had been

shot. I never saw any thing so cruel; even the Ras pitied them, but he was too far in the rear to give orders to spare them. After the pass was cleared, it took us until dark to get through it, and then we encamped upon the mountain close by. Here I had the misfortune to lose three asses, out of the five I had left; and numbers of horses and mules, as well as asses, fell over the precipices and were dashed to atoms.

Next morning the Worari were off before daylight; and before we had marched an hour we could see the smoke of Behader, to which the Worari had set fire, though a good ten miles from the spot where we had encamped. At twelve o'clock we encamped about a mile from the burning town, where we stopped five days, until every village in that part of the country was burned to the ground, and all the *gudgauds*, [pits of corn] that were found were either taken or destroyed. We then marched to Sugernet, where we stopped ten days, and the corn we found there was in such abundance, that we could not destroy it otherwise than by throwing it into the water, or down the precipices of the mountains, where it could not be got at any more. We marched hence to Salem Ga, a Mahomedan town, which the Ras had ordered not to be burnt,

the inhabitants having brought him gold, silver, and cloths; but the farmers belonging to Ras Guebra and his chiefs were plundered.

We stopped at this place five days, and proceeded to the foot of Amba Hai, and although the distance is considerable, we could see from below the piles of stones, like little spires, all along the edges of the mountain. This mountain is very large, the plain on the top being said to be as large as the plain of Gambela, in Enderta, which is a good fifteen miles in length, and contains a vast number of springs, plenty of grass for cattle, much cultivated land, and two large towns, besides many villages. Ras Guebra has a house and extensive premises upon it, and the only thing that makes it disagreeable is the cold. The snow was still lodged deep in many of the narrow ravines, in the high rocks, and all over the place of encampment, although it was the hottest month in the year.

Here I was ordered to place the gun upon its carriage, which I did; but I told the Ras it would be of no use unless we could approach nearer, we being a good three miles and a half, in a straight line, from the gate of entrance, the only one to the mountain, and which was to be fired at. With the Ras's telescope I could see Ras Guebra, surrounded by his soldiers, sitting in the sun.

We stopped here several days, during which messengers were going backward and forward, and all the mischief Tecla Gorgis had been making was distinctly made known to the Ras by a worthy priest, belonging to Ras Guebra, who had kept a true account of what Tecla had been advising his master Guebra to do. It appeared that Tecla Gorgis had always had an aversion to the Ras and Bashaw Dingerze, a chief of Ras Michael's. The latter had given him a good whipping, when in Gondar, for getting upon his horse, and riding him, without his permission; and the Ras he disliked because he was attached to his brother Tecla Himanute, and despised him. The Ras did not show any kind of disrespect to the king, but on the contrary consulted him, as if in earnest, upon all occasions. Tecla, however, getting some knowledge that there were continually messengers passing between Ras Guebra and Welled Selassé, began to persuade the latter to make an attack, and storm the mountain as he had done twice before. This the Ras never meant to do, knowing that it would be attended with the loss of the greatest and bravest part of his army, whose blood would lie upon his own head; he having twice given the mountain up to Ras Guebra, when he might have placed it in the hands of some other chief on whom he could rely.

Samen being a large province, and governed by a king's *gama*, it was agreed that Tecla Gorgis, the king, should give the *gama* to any one of the Ras's chiefs he chose, as governor of Samen; accordingly the king, knowing that the Ras had great esteem for Shum Temben Guebra Michael, and that he was related to the family of Gusmarsh Tusfu, Ras Guebra's father, chose him to be governor. The drum was therefore beat, and it was proclaimed that Guebra Michael was Gusmarsh of all Samen, by the orders of the king Tecla Gorgis, and the *gama* was given to him by the king himself. The *gama* is a stripe of silk stuff, about the width of a broad ribbon, generally red and striped with some other colour, which is tied round the head of one or more of the king's servants, with a large silk rope round the neck, and hanging down the breast; this is called *quod*. When a Ras is chosen, or his office renewed, twelve young boys are equipped and sent to him in this manner. Those intrusted in this affair carry also, in a small calebash, a lion with a cross painted upon white cloth. This is an ancient custom among the Abyssinians, and to this day they oblige the king, either Guarlu or Tecla Gorgis, to send them the *gama* every year at Mascal, the customary day, which is upon the 17th of September; Guxo has it every year

from Guarlu, whom he keeps shut up, more like a prisoner at large than a king; and the Ras sometimes orders Guarlu and sometimes Tecla Gorgis to send it to him. *Gamas* are also given to chiefs who have a whole province under their command.

Messengers still kept going backward and forward, and Ras Welled Selassé sent his English double tent to Ras Guebra, as a present. This tent he esteemed very much, as it was brought, among other-presents, by Mr. Salt. Ras Guebra sent in return several fat sheep and some fresh butter, remarkable for the goodness of its quality and the best in this part of the country. Coming from Amba Hai, he also sent to request that the Ras would fire his *mudfar* [cannon] which he had heard so much talk about, but at the same time begged he would do no harm with it; adding that he thought he could not do a great deal, being at such a distance, although he had heard that he could. The Ras complied with his request, and appointed the time, which was after dark next evening. I was ordered by the Ras to put in four or five cartridges, which I promised to do, but I did not, knowing, that if I said it would be too much, and perhaps burst the gun, the old gentleman would say that I was fearful; as, in the time of Gusmati

Woldi Gabriel, a poor Turk was killed by giving way to such a foolish command from an Abyssinian.

The story of this poor fellow is as follows :— A Greek, now in Abyssinia, a silversmith and coppersmith by trade, and a Turkish soldier, came into the country together. God knows how they found employment in the service of the Gusmati Woldi Gabriel: the silversmith was engaged in making crowns and crosses, and in casting bells for churches, &c., and the Turk was employed as a soldier; but, the poor fellow not being quite so expert as the Abyssinians in climbing and running up and down the mountains, the Gusmati found fault with him, and told him he was not active enough to be a soldier in his service. Ismael, which was his name, replied, "If you will make a cannon, I shall be of more use to you than a hundred men or even a thousand."—"Who can make it?" said the Gusmati. "Avostalla, the Greek," said the Turk; when accordingly the Greek was sent for, and, by the persuasion of the Gusmati, consented to make the experiment, and orders were given to buy all the brass in the country. In the course of three months every thing was completed, and the gun was cast accordingly, and a carriage built such as the country workmen, under the direction

of Ismael, could make. He fired the cannon at first with a small charge, which answered very well. This was done in the market-place of Adowa, where every body was afraid to be near but himself; and well it was they were so timid, for the Gusmati, who was sitting in front of his house upon the hill, to witness the proceedings of Ismael, and who heard the explosion, sent word to him that he had been afraid to put enough powder in, and that the report was not louder than that of a musket. Ismael accordingly put in a large charge, and a large piece of cloth for wadding, and, upon his firing the gun, it burst into a number of pieces. The poor fellow's legs and arms were broken in several places, and his bowels cut out; part of the carriage was found slung in the large *darro*-tree, opposite the church, Kudus Michael, nearly four hundred yards from the spot where the piece burst. Hadge Nuro, now head-carpenter to the Ras, who assisted to make the carriage, told me that he was standing about fifty yards off at the time, and witnessed the accident. With this example before my eyes, I put into the gun no more than the usual charge of powder, and a single ball, and proceeded to fire it. I was at this time with the main army of the Ras, encamped upon a very high mountain opposite to Amba Hai, where Ras Guebra had concentrated

all his forces. A deep valley lay between the two armies, about three miles across in a direct line, in which our Fit-aurari, or advanced guard, was stationed, so that on my firing the gun at the main gate, that defended the difficult pass into Amba Hai, the shot passed directly over the heads of that part of our army lying in the valley.

As it was not my wish to hit the gate, I had previously pointed the gun in such a manner as to make the ball take effect considerably below the gate; but the sensation it produced on both armies, from its luminous appearance in its passage, and the tremendous echoes that succeeded among the mountains, was very great and decisive, as far as regarded the enemy.

The next morning Ras Guebra sent some presents to the Ras, as well as to me; requesting the Ras, at the same time, to permit me to visit him, as he had several questions to ask me relative to the gun; and he also wished me to instruct some of his men in the mode of putting up the tent sent to him two days before, none of his own people being able to pitch it. The Ras, having his suspicions, replied, that though Guebra was welcome to the assistance of any one else in his army, yet, that he could not part with his white son, as he was accustomed to call me, as he

always wished to have him immediately about his own person. Having sent this message, the Ras desired me to dismount the gun, and get the different parts put up ready for carrying again.

May 24th. The holyday Ouner Takley Himanute. We marched, and descended into the valley of Sugernet; the Ras kept the king close in his front, for fear he might desert and get to Waldubba, and there produce more mischief than ever, by sending messengers to Guxo, &c. Next day we marched to Moi Ga, where we stopped, it being Sunday, and the following day marched to the Tacazzé, which we crossed on the 27th, and reached Overgalle, where we stopped a day, to settle the affairs of that district, as it belonged to Ras Guebra.

June 1st. We marched to Agova: next day to Aterer Marts, and the next to Arde Darro.

CHAPTER VIII.

Pearce's Journal resumed—His Return to the Camp and Reception by the Ras—Cry for the Ras's brother—Pearce's Grass taken by the King—Church of Chelicut—The Organ—Expedient for Scaring Grass-Stealers—Rage of the King—The Ras's Buffoon—Buffoons kept by the Chiefs, and their Duties—The King dines with the Ras—Person and Character of King Tecla Gorgis—His Treachery—His Departure for Axum—Hail-Storm—Devastations of Elephants.

JUNE 3rd, 1815. I set out to meet the Ras at Saharte, and in the evening I arrived at his camp, in the plain called Arde Darro. Every one, as well as the Ras, was glad to see me recovered and in perfect health, continually saluting me with the common words used upon such meetings, after sickness, battle, or any danger, meaning, "Glory to God that brought you out!" As soon as I had alighted from my mule, I hastened to the tent of Mr. Coffin, where I found him smoking his pipe, in good health and apparently comfortable. We then went to the Ras together; he had been informed of the death of my son before I entered, and, on seeing me, he uttered the customary words, used among all Abyssinians, when they meet with a friend who

has lately buried any of his family. "*Isgare Sennarkar!*" [I hope God is great towards you]. These words are also used at the breaking-up of a cry, to the relations of the deceased, who collect on a spot by themselves, while all those who are well-wishers come, one at a time, and repeat the above sentence, which is answered by thanks. It is a great affront, and always remembered as a sign of hatred, if this ceremony should be neglected by any acquaintance.

The Ras expressed much grief at the death of the boy, as he had several times sent for him and taken him into his favour. After I had been seated some time he asked me, among other questions, where Debbib was, and if I had been to see him lately. I said I had not; when he inquired, "Did he not come to cry for your boy?" I said, he did not. "I am afraid," he continued, "something has happened to him, for he has not sent me any message for a long time, and then he was very ill." However, the old gentleman kept on playing at chess, which he often does while his supper is on the table, seldom rising quickly from the game unless his appetite is keener than usual. He will even hear lawsuits when playing. At supper he asked me several questions concerning the peace between Subegadis and Giggar: he had already sent to take

Asgas Giggar, but the latter, on hearing of the return of the Ras, had decamped and crossed the Tacazzé, by way of Mardier.

Next morning we marched, and encamped at Esta. The king remained in the same position that he had occupied before, with scarcely twenty people to attend upon him; seeing there were no hopes of his ever prospering, the others had all deserted him, and taken other masters. Here the Ras, who had ordered the Tigré army to march by way of Temben to their respective districts, could not conceive why they had not obeyed his orders, and sent for Palambarus Toclu to inquire into the matter, who told him that the troops had all been dismissed, and that the chiefs were only going to Antàlo upon affairs of their own. Aversaw, the governor of Antàlo, and the Ras's nephew, and Dofter Caslo, his head secretary and treasurer, came to meet him, but not a word was spoken about his brother Debbib, though the Ras really knew of his death. Perceiving that his people wished to keep it a secret till he arrived at Antàlo, he took care not to betray his knowledge of it, or to show that he suspected any thing of the kind. Next morning the army marched into Antàlo, and halted when they reached the market-place, where the priests came to meet the Ras as he entered the town,

and told him of the death of his brother. From that time the cries and the firing of muskets began in all parts of the town, and never did I see such downright folly. The multitude of people was so great that it was impossible to pass the streets, and the walls and tops of the houses were covered with persons of both sexes, young and old. It is the custom, in all parts of Abyssinia, for the women to cheer their chief, when passing, with a singular whining noise, especially when returning from war, but this day the noise was inexpressibly shocking. The Ras himself strove to do what he could to put an end to such folly, but to no purpose; there was not an individual to be seen but with his face torn, and scratched, and covered with blood. The Ras had never been guilty of this barbarous practice since I knew him, having heard from Mr. Salt and myself that it was a sin against Christianity. The cry was held three days. Safarling Guebra Abba, one of the most powerful chiefs on the frontiers of the Galla, died a few days before, and, as he was a great favourite with the Ras, the cry was united with that made for Ito Debbib.

As soon as the cry was over, the Ras gave me and Mr. Coffin leave to go to Chelicut, where my wife had prepared a feast for us and our people,

according to the custom of the country. All neighbours were invited, and kept up the feast for several days, in great glee.

June 12th. The Ras and the king came to Chelicut, to spend the fast of the Apostles. The next morning the king visited his daughter, and rode round Chelicut to see the Ras's gardens and my house. His majesty particularly admired my meadow, the grass being very high at that time, which was the more remarkable as it was the dry season; he even took such a fancy to it, that he gave his servants orders to cut some of the grass daily for his horses' food while he remained at Chelicut. This did not please me, and I accordingly told him that no person should cut it, as the meadow belonged to me; upon which he sent and informed the Ras of the affair, and the Ras sent for me, and told me that the king would not remain at Chelicut long, and therefore, he begged me, in order to put an end to disputes, and gratify his majesty, to let one of his grass-cutters cut a load for him every day and no more. To this I willingly consented, and the Ras sent to the king, to inform him that the piece of ground on which the grass grew was given to Pearce on oath, and that of course neither he himself nor any one else could cut the grass, or even go across the field, without Pearce's

consent; though, in consideration of his majesty, the latter had consented to let him have a load every day for the use of his horses; at this the king appeared to be a little out of humour.

I afterwards conducted the king to the head church, to show him the articles presented to the Ras by Mr. Salt; he expressed great surprise at the workmanship of the marble table, and the picture, saying, "Ras Welled Selassé has surpassed the ancient kings of Ethiopia for grandeur, and even brought the Feringees to *gibber*, [tribute] then looking round to me, with his large eyes fixed stedfastly upon me, he said in a disdainful tone: "Pearce, do not the people of your country lose their heads if they deny their king any thing, as for example his own grass?" "If it were his that was denied him," I replied, "certainly, but none but a madman would do that; though, if it were not his own," I added, "he would pay the current price for it, as other people do." "How," said he, "can he be king, if every blade of grass in the kingdom is not his?" "Yes," said I, "he can be a king for all that, for he is always a good Christian, and such a one knows that God gave all men the same right of living upon earth, which was made for man alone, and that he, as king, was to be a guard against taking one from another, and not to take from them himself."

"You Feringees are cunning dogs," said he. "Brave and true," replied I. The organ, which Mr. Coffin had just begun to turn, next took his attention; he stood several minutes looking at it, at last went close to it, looked at the inside, and appeared quite lost in contemplation. "I hear it breathe," said he, several times, and as, upon putting his ear close, he could hear a hiss now and then, occasioned by there being a small hole in the leather on one side of the bellows, he cried out, "By Saint Michael, there is a snake in it! I hear it plainly;" and quickly drawing back, he exclaimed, "Such a thing which contains a devil cannot be fit for a church." Allicar Barhe, the high-priest, standing close by, said, "Ganvar, I beg your pardon, it is an angel, not a devil; our church has not suffered in any way since it came into it, but on the contrary has rather increased in prosperity. Ito Pearce has opened the whole before the *carmart* [congregation of priests] and all are of opinion that nothing but the wisdom of man, such as God gave unto Solomon, had made it;" and he added, "Abuna Comfu told us that he saw one in the church of St. Paulos and Petros, in Rome, as large as twenty of this." After we had shown him every thing, he returned, greatly astonished at what he had seen, to his house, which was not far from mine. The man

who looked after my meadow told me that several of Itsa Tecla Gorgis's men had been there, and wanted to cut grass by force. "But I cried out," he said, "*Ber Tecla Amlach, Ber Segar Itsa,*" meaning, By the substance of Tecla, by the flesh of the king, you shall not cut it! a mode they have of expressing resistance to oppression; yet even then they would scarcely let the grass alone.

Next day I was informed that several loads had been stolen from the middle of the meadow during the night, which greatly vexed me and my servant, and I determined in consequence to plan some scheme of revenge. I told the Ras what had happened at supper-time, and the scheme we proposed highly pleased him, as he would have somethimg to make a laugh of at dinner next day, especially as Tottamasey, the Ras's clown, was to be there. So, after it was well dark, knowing that the Amhara are terribly frightened at fire-arms, we placed several of our men, at different distances, round the meadow, each with his musket well loaded with blank cartridges, and gave them directions to lie close in the high grass until they should hear the first one fire. We put out the lights in the house just as the moon was rising, to give the appearance of our being asleep, and we sat over the gateway

of the house that looked towards the meadow. I and Mr. Coffin, with two or three who we knew could run well, took off our white cloths that we might not be seen, and put on skins and went to the part where we had observed nine or ten men cross the river, and go into the middle of the field. After we had got as near to them as possible, and had seen them cutting away, without dreaming of what would happen, we let fly, and it is impossible to describe the confusion into which the poor fellows were thrown. They dropped their cloths and skins, and ran as fast as possible to the opposite side of the meadow, where they had another gun or two fired at them, at which they ran some one way and some another, but, whichever way they went, they had a gun fired at them; three of them dropped down as if shot dead, through fear, the others cried out *Serlassey! Serlassey!* and crossed the river, and got clear of us, but three of their companions, their reaping-hooks, cloths, and skins, remained in our possession. These three we took prisoners to our house, and tied them fast together; while those who had escaped ran to the king's house, quite naked, telling a most lamentable story to the servants, who were all awakened by their noise, and a cry was soon set up by the whole household for the three, whom,

as they declared, Pearce and his soldiers had shot.

The king, being awakened by the cry, and being informed of the matter, flew into a violent rage, and sent to the Ras, declaring that one of the men shot by the Feringee, though poor, was related to him, and that he demanded blood for blood. The Ras, though he could scarcely refrain from laughing, pretended to be greatly concerned, and said, that at day-light he would enquire into the matter, adding, "If I send to fetch them now it will only make bad worse, for they have powder and shot enough to shoot every man I have." The king, who had himself persuaded the grass-cutters to steal our grass, never lay down all the remainder of the night, swearing he would have life for life, otherwise he would raise the priests against the Ras. Meanwhile his men were getting quite intoxicated, and at sunrise I gave them their cloths, reaping-hooks, &c., and a good draught of brandy each, and sent them staggering away to their master, where they arrived just as he was pressing the Ras to attack my house. Their appearance incensed Tecla ten times worse than before, thinking he had been deprived of a night's rest, and given me and Mr. Coffin reason to think him our enemy.

At dinner Tottamasey began by pretending he

had really seen the Amhara in their fright; he put on such pitiable looks and dying postures, mimicking the Amhara who thought themselves dead when they fell, that the Ras could scarcely taste a morsel all the time for laughing at the buffoon and the numerous chiefs who were sitting about him with their mouths full, staring and affecting the motions of Tottamasey. This personage is very old, but a remarkably lively man, and was the head harlequin to Ras Michael. The governors of the provinces commonly keep several persons of this kind, to divert them at feasts and upon holydays, and they have the income of a district allowed them for their maintenance. They are in general good poets, and run, or ride, before their chief when going from or to war, descanting in poetry, and in a loud voice, to the chief and his troops, upon the reward of bravery; the redemption of the sins of a soldier, who dies in the presence of his master in the field of glory; the curse which God sends upon those who flinch or run away, and many such subjects, to keep up and stimulate the courage of the soldiers. These people are called in the Amhara language Ozmare, in Tigré Warta; the enemy never kill them if taken in battle, any more than they do trumpeters and fifers, if Christians; but the Galla spare no one in war.

The Ras remained here until the conclusion of the fast, which is on the 5th of July, on which day he invited the king to dine with him, as also on the 7th, which is the great holyday, called Hamley Selassé, or the anniversary of the Holy Trinity appearing to the Patriarch Abraham before Sodom and Gomorrah were burnt. On this day the king dined with the Ras, who sat upon the carpets spread upon the ground; the king was seated upon the high sofa, and no person of the court was allowed to sit down, until the king had done eating, after which he pointed out such of the chiefs as should eat. I had been sitting with Mr. Coffin close behind the Ras, from the time the table was spread, but we had not tasted any thing, except what the Ras was pleased to cram now and then into our mouths. It is very common at the table of any chief in Abyssinia, for him to order the *selafé*, that is the man or woman who is feeding him, to give food to those who are sitting near him; but this is not the custom with Tecla Gorgis, who eats ravenously, and always has a man to hold a screen before his face, to hinder him from noticing any person; indeed he is the only one I knew of so selfish a disposition. In his personal appearance he looks quite the reverse; he is tall, and stout in proportion, always wears his hair long

and plaited; has large eyes, a Roman nose, not much beard, and a very manly and expressive countenance, though he is a great coward. He has a dark shining skin, which is very singular, as the king Itsa Yohannes, and his wife, Ozoro Sancheviyer, Tecla's father and mother, were very fair for Abyssinians, and Tecla Himanute, his brother, was also very fair, while he, the youngest son, is as dark as mahogany. The Ras, who knew the whole family, often remarked this, and repeated "Black without, and black within." The character of Tecla, through life, has been abominable: he is by all accounts sixty-six years of age, though he makes his age much less, as, in general, the Abyssinians dislike to be reckoned old when they really are so, and none either of the higher or lower classes know their own age exactly. They keep no account from the year, or month, in which they were born, but from the time that such a king, Ras, Gusmarsh, or governor of the province to which they belong, reigned or governed. Thus, when you ask any one how old he is, he will tell you that he was born in the reign of such a king, or Ras, &c., leaving you to find out how many years ago that may be, and the nearest account you can get from him is, that he was born in the beginning, middle, or end of their reign.

Tecla Gorgis is remarkably proud of his person: though a little bald at the top of his head, he manages to have the hair, which is nearly a span long, so plaited and disposed as to hide the bald part. He always wears a silver or gold bodkin with a large head, called *wolever*, upon his forehead; and round the instep, and below the ancle, a string of oval silver or gold beads, such as are worn by all women rich and poor, and which are called *aloo*.

It may be here proper to give some account of this once great emperor's character, which I intend to draw according to what I have heard, not only by word of mouth from numbers, but also from his history at Axum, and my own observations. I shall begin by stating, in plain English, that he is a great liar and a great miser, and from his childhood has been remarkable for his changeable and deceitful temper, and utter disregard of his oath. When suspicious of any of his people, it was his habit to send privately to them, telling them, whatever they were concerned in, to let him know all, as he himself had learnt somewhat of their proceedings from people who were continually putting bad things into his head; the poor offenders, who took all this for truth, would beg his majesty to swear to forgive them, a customary practice in Abyssinia on such

occasions. Tecla never hesitated about taking the oath, but would immediately kiss the cross when presented to him by the priest, who had the management of the sacred affair, and, as soon as he was gone from his presence, would say to the officers who attended upon his person, "See, I scrape from my tongue, which made the oath and touched the cross, all it has uttered," and so saying he would put his tongue between his teeth, and, drawing it in, would spit, and exclaim, "When the rebel comes, do your duty as I shall order you." In this manner he has brought his subjects even from the Galla, where they had fled for protection, fearing his treachery. Comfu Adam, governor of Begemder, and a near relation to the king, was trepanned in this manner, and had his tongue cut out on his arrival. The Gusmati Woldi Gabriel, son of Ras Michael, who was on terms of the greatest friendship with him, and had marched from Tigré to assist him against Ras Ilo and Marro, who had rebelled against Tecla, and almost driven him from Gondar, became, after conquering all Gojam and the neighbouring districts that had been concerned in the rebellion, an object of jealousy in the eyes of the king; who, after inventing his treacherous schemes, and swearing and releasing the rebels, who he well knew would be glad to take revenge

on Woldi Gabriel, sent for him, apparently in a friendly manner, and on his arrival at court said to him, "Woldi Gabriel, I have made up my mind to go to Shoa, and take the Tigré army with me." This surprised the Gusmati, who imagined it to be a joke; however, seeing the king in earnest, he represented to him that the Tigré troops were already much tired and numbers of them sick, and that he had, on the conclusion of the war, dismissed more than ten thousand to their respective districts, as he had promised him that he should return to Tigré. He added, "I could never attempt to take my army through a country inhabited only by Pagans. What village would receive our lame and sick? Would they not all be murdered by my own hands, if I were to commit such an act of folly?" The king answered, "Why do you consider the death of a fly?" "Fly," said Woldi Gabriel, "if my soldiers are but flies, I am naught but a large fly." "If you are no more than a fly," said the king, "you are not able to serve me." He immediately ordered the very rebels whom Woldi had conquered to lay hold of him and bind him, and the whole of his troops were stripped of every thing, and some, in attempting to escape, were killed. Woldi Gabriel was kept in chains, until he brought the last article of value he possessed,

to ransom himself, while his brave troops had to find their way home, over the cold mountains of Samen, without either cloths or skins to cover their nakedness.

Tecla Gorgis, though thought to be a very learned man in the Scriptures, sets the worst of examples to Christians, for, notwithstanding his professed religious principles, he is the greatest adulterer in existence. Though he keeps Ozoro Cottser and Ozoro Teschen as regular wives, he has, in general, when at home, ten or twelve other women in the same house, parted off like so many mules or horses. He pays no respect to beauty, nor scarcely to age, no matter whether it be a lady, a beggar, or a nun. He has a number of children in all parts of the country, some by women of the lowest class, many of whom are grown up and are great vagabonds.

The Ras by this time had become tired of the king's conduct and company, and, fearing he might corrupt the morals of his daughter, on the 9th July he ordered him to march for Axum, notwithstanding the rains which had begun, and which rendered the roads very bad, and also gave directions how the king should be provided for, allowing him a certain income to be administered to him by Palambarus Toclu, whom the Ras had secretly charged to keep a strict watch upon

his motions, and not let him escape from Axum, though, until the conclusion of the rains, it would be impossible for him to pass the Tacazzé to Waldubba. I went with the Ras, who accompanied him, as far as Arder Cola, and Mr. Coffin rode my horse, by desire of the king, who told him that he had heard a great deal of talk about it. In fact he was highly pleased, and declared it to be a better horse than the Ras's favourite Bulla. This horse was given to me by the Ras, at the last request of Mr. Salt, when taking his parting leave; although the Gusmarsh Liban, who had given it to the Ras, had made him promise to keep it for his own riding, and none but Mr. Salt could have prevailed upon him to break this promise. On our taking leave of the king to return, he said to me and Mr. Coffin, "After the rains are over come and pay me a visit at Axum; we shall some day or another be great friends." On our return the Ras seemed to be quite merry, and more lively than he had been for some days past, a sign that he was glad he had got rid of his troublesome guest. He remained at Chelicut, and there kept his fast of fifteen days for the Blessed Virgin.

August 19th. We had a very heavy fall of hail and rain, which lasted an uncommonly long time. Unluckily for me I had two calves and

fifty-three goats, belonging to me and Mr. Coffin, washed away by the flood, which, in return, filled our meadow with a quantity of large trees, that it had rooted out from the banks of the river. Several of these were left within twenty yards of my house, and the wood was sufficient to last us at least two years and a half or three years for our own use; but we distributed some among our neighbours. It is a law in Abyssinia that if Providence sends you any thing by a flood, such as a tree or piece of timber of any kind, even if it has been already cut, it belongs to the owner of the field upon which it is found; but if it be not found upon cultivated ground, then the person who first finds it has a right to it. Until this day we had had very moderate rains, such as were required for the growth of the corn, &c., indeed the corn was in a very thriving state, but wanted a little more rain; but this last rain did more harm than good, for in our part the hail cut the young grass and almost destroyed it, and with it our future hopes of a good harvest.

August 29th, The Ras went to Mucculla, where he kept his new year's day, on the 1st of September, and the holyday of Kudus Yohannis, Saint John's day. Here he remained until the 11th, when he visited the spot of Abba Annernier, with all his troops, as is customary every year.

September the 14th. We returned to Chelicut, and, on the 16th, after receiving my fat Mascal cow as usual, I and Mr. Coffin, as in other years, mustered all our people dressed in their warlike habit, and accompanied the Ras to Antàlo. The Enderta troops were reviewed the same day, and luckily we were among them, as no musket-men were allowed to be present on the occasion, on account of the accidents that happened before, as I have already related. Nothing particular took place this Mascal between the Ras and his chiefs, excepting the affair of Asgas Giggar, who had gone into the service of Ras Guebra, and whose districts the Ras gave to Palambarus Toclu and to Ito Sanna.

October the 10th. We went to Lama. Here we found, as the Ras had been previously informed, that the elephants and rhinoceroses had broken down the fences round the church, trampled all the vines and ruined the corn, which had been in great perfection. It is well known in Shiré and several other parts of Abyssinia, as well as here, where elephants frequent, that they pluck up the young corn and trample it, as if done on purpose and out of mischief. The poor monks had quitted the church and fled to the caves and mountains, but their last year's stock not being hurt, they had plenty of provisions, which they had taken

care to carry with them to their new abode. The Ras thought it would be only folly to repair the fence again, for it was certain the elephants would destroy it as fast as it was repaired. He therefore told the monks to do their best for the future and look out for themselves, and soon left the place and went to Mucculla. On our way the hunters killed numbers of partridges and guinea-fowl, and some wild hogs or boars. The whole country being at peace, the Ras remained quiet, hearing lawsuits and playing at chess, his favourite pastime.

This is perhaps a good opportunity to give some account of the manners, customs, &c. of the Abyssinians, acquired from my own long experience, and by carefully observing all classes.

CHAPTER IX.

Character, Manners, and Customs, of the Abyssinians—Their Complexion—Precarious nature of the Matrimonial tie—Masters and Servants—Mechanics—Extraordinary Superstition respecting the Potters and workers in Iron—Supposed to have the Power of Transforming themselves into Hyænas—The Zackary—Persons possessed with Evil Spirits—Cure for that Disorder—Case of Pearce's Wife—Diseases—Treatment in Small-pox—Four Species of Venereal Complaint—Medicines—Scrophula—The Tape-worm—Wild Honey—Lying-in Women—Ceremony of Christening—Whimsical Practice to preserve Children from dying—Marriage—Divorce—Law-suits—Wagers.

THE Abyssinians vary much in their colour, some being very black, with nearly straight hair, others copper-coloured, and the hair not so straight, some much fairer with almost woolly hair, and some of the same complexion, but straight-haired. They also vary much in their temper, and, as is the case in all countries and classes of people, they are mild, passionate, barbarous, compas sionate, true and false, proud and miserly, even in the same family. This can scarcely be otherwise, especially in towns governed by governors and petty chiefs, where you may find women the mothers of five, six, or more children;

the father of one an Amhara, of another an Agow, of another a Tigré, and of another a Galla. Indeed, I know many people of quality who can give no account of their fathers; but this is most common among the lower classes of the people, and is occasioned by the continual alteration in the government. A man in a town or village may take a wife with whom he may wish to live all his life, and, when he is perhaps getting comfortably settled, the governor whom he serves is driven from his office and another appointed in his stead. The new governor immediately seizes every person's land and property belonging to or in the service of the ex-governor, which he gives to one of his own soldiers or followers; while the former owner is obliged to fly to another district for refuge, leaving his wife and children, if he has any, in her native place. She will soon get another husband, while her last, if he prospers, finding another master, will also marry another wife. Soldiers quit their master's service as they please, and go from province to province, and from governor to governor, as they think proper, and for their advantage, whether Amhara or Tigré, being quite regardless if it is to the most malicious enemy of their former master, as punishment is seldom inflicted for such offences. Indeed, the *wotada* [soldiers of Abys-

sinia] are seldom settled for many months together, unless it be those who are in the service of a governor who rules over the very village in which they were born. These in general cultivate land, and live comfortably without paying the usual income of a peasant to government; though, were he to neglect one encampment or any march made by his governor, either in the service of his king, or Ras, or upon his own account, every thing that he has is seized, and then he must look out for another master in another district, or live in his native village or town as a peasant.

All their arms, such as spears, shields, and knives, the soldiers find for themselves, but matchlocks are the property of their masters; so, when they wish to desert, they hang their gun up in their master's house and depart. Although there would not be the least chance of the master's recovering a gun if a soldier should take it and desert to an enemy, yet, I never knew any thing of the kind happen, not even when they have quitted their master's premises in a rage to go over to the enemy. They frequently return after being some months away, and their master, in general, after swearing a few petty oaths not to allow them admittance, makes it up, and they enter with a large stone upon their necks, bowing

with their foreheads to the ground, and again become as familiar with their master on the first day as they were the day they deserted him. In this manner each chief becomes acquainted with the others' actions, their way of living, their tempers, their family concerns, whether mean or splendid, and their disposition towards women. Indeed, they are all very particular in enquiring into the very closest connections of one another's families, especially when at enmity; and these matters often become the subject of their talk when sitting over their *bruly*, or horn of maize.

It is well known to numbers, as well as to myself, that a chief will sometimes command a servant in whom he has great confidence to desert him, and go and live with one with whom he is at enmity, purposely to become acquainted with all his connections; and, to make it appear that the servant is really dismissed, his master, who has put him up to every thing that he wants him to do, will, upon the day appointed, affect to be in a great rage with him in the presence of numbers of bystanders, ordering him to be stripped of the small piece of cloth about his waist, the only thing they wear about them, and beaten, and turned out of his premises. The servant, hearing the order, drops his cloth and runs off naked, and soon after finds his way to the house of his mas-

ter's enemy, who is highly pleased at the opportunity of possessing a once trusty servant in adversity; and, upon seeing the servant naked and with the apparent marks of a whip, which he had inflicted upon himself by scratching upon his skin, feels sure of the quarrel having really happened, and gives him a cloth, as is customary in all parts of Abyssinia, and throughout all classes of the inhabitants. The Abyssinians are very partial to new acquaintances, and in consequence the new-comer is the greatest *balermal*, or favourite, in the family. Some of these rogues will remain a whole year even, and when they at last quit, they do not immediately return to their original master, but will keep about his premises at a distance for some time, begging every chief who visits the house to entreat their master to forgive them, which is done to prevent the chief whom they have been living with, and who perhaps may not reside at a great distance, from suspecting the scheme.

The people who live in the larger sort of towns, and especially the mechanics, in general lead the most undisturbed life, and are considered the best Christians. Those who work in silver and gold, in brass, or at the carpenters' trade, are esteemed as persons of high rank; but those who work in iron or pottery are not allowed the privilege

even of being in common society, nor are they permitted to receive the sacrament as Christians. They are reckoned even by their nearest neighbours to have the supernatural power of changing themselves into hyænas* or other beasts, and upon that account every body dreads them. All

* It is very difficult to trace the foundation of this singular superstition, which is most implicitly believed by every Abyssinian, and which Mr. Coffin himself speaks of with a degree of seriousness that can scarcely be wondered at after the almost inexplicable facts that have come immediately under his own knowledge. These Budas, or workers in iron and pottery, are distinguished, it appears, from other classes, by a peculiar gold ear-ring, which is worn by the whole race, and which kind of ring, Mr. Coffin declares, he has frequently seen in the ears of hyænas that have been shot in traps or speared by himself and others; but in what manner these ornaments came to be placed in so singular a situation, Mr. Coffin, who has taken considerable pains to investigate the subject, has never been able to obtain the slightest clue to discover. Besides the power which it is supposed these Budas possess of transforming themselves, at will, into hyænas and some other animals, though the former seems to be their favourite shape, many strange stories are told of the diseases they are able to inflict on their enemies through their evil eye; and so fully convinced are the Abyssinians, that these unfortunate blacksmiths are in the habit of defrauding the grave of its dues, in their midnight *masquerades*, that no one will venture to eat what is called *quanter*, or dried meat, in their houses; though they have not the smallest repugnance to sit down with them to a repast of *raw meat*, where the killing of the animal before their eyes dissipates at once their former horrible illusion.

I shall here add one story respecting these Budas, related to me by Mr. Coffin, to the circumstances of which he may be said to have been nearly an eye-witness. It happened that among his servants he had hired one of these Budas, who, one evening, but when it was perfect day-light, came to

convulsions or hysteric disorders, which are as common in Abyssinia as in other parts of the world, are here attributed to the evil eye of these people. They are called by the Amhara *Buda*, and by the Tigré *Tebbib*. Many marvellous deeds done by them have been related to me by persons

request his master to give him leave of absence till the morning. This request was immediately granted, and the young man took his leave; but scarcely was Mr. Coffin's head turned to his other servants, when some of them called out, pointing in the direction the Buda had taken, "Look, look, he is turning himself into a hyæna!" Mr. Coffin instantly looked round, but though he certainly did not witness the transformation, yet the young man had vanished, and he saw a large hyæna running off at about a hundred paces distance. This happened in an open plain, without tree or bush to intercept the view. The young man returned in the morning, and was attacked by his companions on the subject of his change, which he rather affected to countenance than deny, according to the usual practice of his brethren.

From the latter circumstance, I should be inclined to imagine that the belief in the above superstitious notions is, from some motive or other, purposely fostered by the Budas themselves. The trades they follow are some of the most lucrative in the country, and, as they are both exclusively in the hands of particular families, in whom the right of exercising them descends from father to son, it appears probable that, in order to render themselves more secure from all chance of competition, they may wish to envelope themselves in darkness and mystery, and even place the ornaments above-mentioned in the ears either of the young hyænas they may take, or the old ones they can entrap, and then dismiss them to the wilderness, with their newly acquired embellishments. I mentioned this idea to Mr. Coffin, who seemed to think the conjecture more than probable, and promised on his return to the country to do every thing in his power to ascertain the fact. It is, however, but fair to own, that he says he never saw a very young hyæna with the ornaments in question.—*Editor.*

of superior intelligence of both sexes, which, however ridiculous, may serve to illustrate the superstitious character of the people in this part of the world. Although these Budas are obliged to put up with reproaches and all manner of scorn from other Christians, and even their nearest neighbours, yet they are partial to that religion, and, though not allowed the sacrament, keep the whole of the fasts and Lents as strictly as any Christians in the country. There are, indeed, Mahometan and Jew Budas, and, as I have before said, all that work in iron and pottery are deemed such. What this whimsical notion sprang from I never could learn. Gojam is the province supposed to contain most of them.

The Zackary are another extraordinary set of beings: though esteemed good Christians, I have myself seen them go roaring about the towns, making a most dreadful noise, and being apparently in great trouble, whipping themselves, and at times cutting their flesh with knives. These people are most numerous in the province of Tigré, and they have a church which is resorted to by none but themselves; it is at no great distance from Axum, and is dedicated to their saint, Oun Arvel. They are very proud of styling themselves descendants of Saint George. In their church Oun Arvel they pretend that a light burns

continually without the assistance of human aid. I have more than once watched an opportunity to blow this light out, but those in care of it were too attentive to their duty to let me succeed, though I once effected my purpose in pointing out a similar imposition of these priests at Jummer-a-Mariam in Lasta.

There is also a holy water at the church Oun Arvel, which is greatly esteemed for the cure of persons afflicted with evil spirits. This is a very wonderful disorder, which I cannot pass over in silence, though the reader may think it fabulous and ridiculous; yet we have accounts of something of the same kind in the New Testament, which the priests and learned men of Abyssinia believe to be the same complaint. This complaint is called *tigretier;* it is more common among the women than among the men. The *tigretier* seizes the body as if with a violent fever, and from that turns to a lingering sickness, which reduces the patients to skeletons and often kills them, if the relations cannot procure the proper remedy. During this sickness their speech is changed to a kind of stuttering, which no one can understand but those afflicted with the same disorder. When the relations find the malady to be the real *tigretier*, they join together to defray the expenses of curing it; the first remedy they

in general attempt, is to procure the assistance of a learned Dofter, who reads the Gospel of St. John, and drenches the patient with cold water daily for the space of seven days—an application that very often proves fatal. The most effectual cure, though far more expensive than the former, is as follows. The relations hire for a certain sum of money a band of trumpeters, drummers, and fifers, and buy a quantity of liquor; then all the young men and women of the place assemble at the patient's house, to perform the following most extraordinary ceremony.

I once was called in by a neighbour to see his wife, a very young woman, and of whom he was very fond, who had the misfortune to be afflicted with this disorder; and the man being an old acquaintance of mine, and always a close comrade in the camp, I went every day, when at home, to see her, but I could not be of any service to her, though she never refused my medicines. At this time I could not understand a word she said, although she talked very freely, nor could any of her relations understand her. She could not bear the sight of a book or a priest, for at the sight of either she struggled, and was apparently seized with acute agony, and a flood of tears, like blood mingled with water, would pour down her face from her eyes. She had lain

three months in this lingering state, living upon so little that it seemed not enough to keep a human body alive; at last her husband agreed to employ the usual remedy, and, after preparing for the maintenance of the band, during the time it would take to effect the cure, he borrowed from all his neighbours their silver ornaments, and loaded her legs, arms, and neck, with them.

The evening that the band began to play, I seated myself close by her side as she lay upon the couch, and, about two minutes after the trumpets had begun to sound, I observed her shoulders begin to move, and soon afterwards her head and breast, and in less than a quarter of an hour she sat upon her couch. The wild look she had, though sometimes she smiled, made me draw off to a greater distance, being almost alarmed to see one nearly a skeleton move with such strength; her head, neck, shoulders, hands, and feet, all made a strong motion to the sound of the music, and in this manner she went on by degrees until she stood up on her legs upon the floor. Afterwards she began to dance, and at times to jump about, and at last, as the music and noise of the singers increased, she often sprang three feet from the ground. When the music slackened, she would appear quite out of temper, but, when it became louder, she would smile and be delighted. During

this exercise she never shewed the least symptom of being tired, though the musicians were thoroughly exhausted; and when they stopped to refresh themselves by drinking and resting a little, she would discover signs of discontent.

Next day, according to the custom in the cure of this disorder, she was taken into the market-place, where several jars of *maize* or *tsug* were set in order by the relations, to give drink to the musicians and dancers. When the crowd had assembled, and the music was ready, she was brought forth and began to dance and throw herself into the maddest postures imaginable, and in this manner she kept on the whole day. Towards evening, she began to let fall her silver ornaments from her neck, arms, and legs, one at a time, so that in the course of three hours she was stripped of every article. A relation continually kept going after her as she danced, to pick up the ornaments, and afterwards delivered them to the owners from whom they were borrowed. As the sun went down, she made a start with such swiftness, that the fastest runner could not come up with her, and, when at the distance of about two hundred yards, she dropped on a sudden, as if shot. Soon afterwards, a young man, on coming up with her, fired a matchlock over her body, and struck her upon the back with the broad side of his large

knife, and asked her name, to which she answered as when in her common senses, a sure proof of her being cured; for, during the time of this malady, those afflicted with it never answer to their Christian name. She was now taken up in a very weak condition and carried home, and a priest came and baptized her again in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which ceremony concluded her cure. Some are taken in this manner to the market-place for many days before they can be cured, and it sometimes happens that they cannot be cured at all. I have seen them in these fits dance with a *bruly*, or bottle of maize, upon their heads, without spilling the liquor, or letting the bottle fall, although they have put themselves into the most extravagant postures.

I could not have ventured to write this from hearsay, nor could I conceive it possible, until I was obliged to put this remedy in practice upon my own wife, who was seized with the same disorder, and then I was compelled to have a still nearer view of this strange disorder*. I at first

* I am much inclined to believe, from what I have learnt from Mr. Coffin as well as from the whole account itself, that, had Pearce persisted in his first remedy, he would have found it perfectly efficacious. It seems the Abyssinian ladies are remarkably fond of decking themselves out with trinkets and finery of all sorts, and of making themselves of consequence; and as, on the occasions in question, a lady's degree of importance is weighed by

thought that a whip would be of some service, and one day attempted a few strokes, when unnoticed by any person, we being by ourselves, and I having a strong suspicion that this ailment sprang from the weak minds of women, who were encouraged in it for the sake of the grandeur, rich dress, and music, which accompany the cure. But how much was I surprised, the moment I struck a light blow, thinking to do good, to find that she became like a corpse, and even the joints of her fingers became so stiff that I could not straighten them; indeed I really thought that she was dead, and immediately made it known to the people in the house that she had fainted, but did not tell them the cause, upon which they immediately brought music, which I had for many

the value and number of the ornaments and attendants, furnished by her relatives and friends, I fancy the source of this pretended complaint arises from causes somewhat allied to those, which not unfrequently induce our school-boys and young ladies to try the patience of their medical attendants and friends, by shamming anomalous disorders. Similar practices are by no means uncommon among our soldiers, and I have heard many of our army surgeons declare, that it often requires more sagacity to detect what are termed *malingerers* than to discover the causes of a real disease. Poor Pearce, I have heard, was not very fortunate in his domestic partner, and as the whole account of *her* attack wears a very suspicious aspect, there appears to be little doubt that a perseverance in his simple remedy would have afforded a speedy cure; more especially as, I am told by Mr. Coffin, he has himself known many instances in Abyssinia, where the same remedy has been applied with singular success.—*Editor.*

days denied them, and which soon revived her; and I then left the house to her relations to cure her at my expense, in the manner I have before mentioned, though it took a much longer time to cure my wife than the woman I have just given an account of. One day I went privately, with a companion, to see my wife dance, and kept at a short distance, as I was ashamed to go near the crowd. On looking stedfastly upon her, while dancing or jumping, more like a deer than a human being, I said that it certainly was not my wife; at which my companion burst into a fit of laughter, from which he could scarcely refrain all the way home. Men are sometimes afflicted with this dreadful disorder, but not frequently. Among the Amhara and Galla it is not so common.

Other natural diseases, except the small-pox and measles, are not commonly dangerous. Fevers are very rare except in the *kolla* [low country] at the commencement of the rains. The superstitious people imagine that fevers arise from a blow of an evil spirit. If the patient survives seven days he is thought safe. They call a fever *muttart*, and the only remedy they in general use for it is the juice of some cooling leaves, ground and rubbed over the temples of the patient; and they fasten different roots and herbs about the head and body, as also written charms, which

however are not employed for the cure of this disorder in particular, but worn by every body, sick or well, high or low. Colds and sore eyes are very common, but not dangerous, and are caught in general through personal neglect; the Abyssinians sleeping in the sun by day, and being exposed to the heavy dews by night, with scarcely a rag to cover them. The leprosy is very common among the lower class, especially in the provinces to the southward, where I have seen thousands who had lost their fingers and toes, and who had their bodies covered all over with large white spots. They call the leprosy *duhe segar;* and those afflicted with this disease are not only great beggars, but also thieves and very insolent; they will even abuse the governor of the district they are in, as he passes, though he never takes any notice of them, agreeably to the custom of the country.

The small-pox, as I have before mentioned, is the most destructive complaint known in Abyssinia. Upon the approach of that disorder, the people in the country and villages collect their children and those who have not had it into one gang, for the purpose of having them inoculated. Every one carries a piece of salt, or a measure of corn: they then march together to the neighbouring town, or wherever the disorder may have made

its appearance. Here they pick out a person, who is thickest covered with sores, and procure a skilful person or Dofter, who takes a quantity of matter from him into an egg-shell, and then by turns he cuts a small cross with a razor in the arm, puts in it a little of the matter, and afterwards binds it up with a piece of rag. The salt and other articles which they carry are given to the Dofter, and he divides it with the person from whom the matter is taken. After this operation they all return home, singing and shouting praises to God, in a joyful manner, and beseeching him to preserve them from death during the time of their disease. From the time the fever takes them, they are put into a close hut or house, where not a breath of air, and if possible not the least light, can enter. Here they are laid naked upon river-sand, or wood-ashes, the latter being preferred in general when they are covered thickest. Neither male dogs, male cats, cocks, nor any other male animals, are suffered to remain about the house. Their superstition causes them even to affirm for a truth that, in all cases of sexual intercourse, either on the part of human beings or animals, in or about the premises where the patient lies, the devil brings the shadow of the sin upon them and kills them for his own. When a horse or mule is castrated, the animal is

not allowed to be seen by any visiter until the sore is healed, from a similar superstition.

A disease contracted from sexual intercourse is very common throughout the country, and often is the ruin of many people from want of proper medicine. It is never kept a secret, but, as soon as it is discovered, those afflicted make it known to all their friends and neighbours, and thus it becomes public throughout the district in which they live; and every friend will pay a visit, and, if the disorder has fallen upon some man or woman of consequence, they will often meet upon a day appointed, and keep a cry at the house, as when a person dies. This disease is called in the Amhara language *kitchin*, in Tigré *fintarta;* it is quite different from the disease that exists in Europe. Here are four different kinds, viz. *armarzes, bersine, gulla, and negus fintarta*. Armarzes,* or the elephant's disease, breaks into large sores, in general under the arm-pits, the neck, and mouth, and very much affects the throat. *Bersine,* which takes its name from a small brown pea which it resembles, in general covers the body, arms, and thighs, as well as the face, especially the lips, with large pimples full of pus. *Gulla* takes its name from its generally breaking out

* Probably, from the description given, none of these diseases are of the nature of the one to which Pearce alludes.—*Editor.*

under the arm-pits, like a large fungus, which continually keeps raw. The *negus fintarta*, which signifies the king's disease, seldom shews itself outwardly, but occasions rheumatic pains, at times giving rise to large swellings in the internal parts of the body, and also affects the head very much, and frequently destroys the bones. Many are ruined by this dreadful disease; for, when the swellings burst, they commonly spread and eat away the flesh in a horrible manner. To cure this disease they take strong purgatives, bulbs, roots, herbs, flowers, and barks; the most esteemed of these is called by the Tigré *abba-chugo*, a very small bulb, resembling that of garlic, only bearing a reddish-brown skin, having a strong and very sickly taste; this also kills the tape-worm. The wood and root of a tree called *tumback*, a very strong purgative, are also used on these occasions. A small herb, mixed with milk, called *induckduck*, produces the like effect. I may add the flower of *cusho**, in Amhara, in

* The medicine called *cusho*, so efficacious in the cure of tape-worm, was first made known to Europeans by Mr. Bruce, though, according to Dr. Madden, a French physician has subsequently reaped the honour of the discovery. The *cusho* is a very powerful medicine, and of great service in the cure of the tape-worm, though Mr. Coffin considers it not so effectual as the *shenna* in cases of this nature. Besides the above medicines, many others are found in the country, some of which are said to possess very

Tigré *hobbe*, and also *shenna*, the bark of a tree, which are both strong purgatives, and much celebrated for killing the tape-worm.

They have numbers of other medicinal roots and herbs, but the above are the most common; such as can afford it take another remedy to cure some of the above disorders; it is a medicine brought into this country by the Mahomedans, who say that it comes from Morocco; it is called *wishwar*. It resembles small brown sticks, or dried stalks of a plant, which, being pounded and made into bolusses, the patient swallows six at a time, morning and evening, and is then put into a dark place, where he is laid between two large fires, allowed to eat nothing but a cake made of wheat flour without salt, and obliged to drink several large horns of honey and water every day. The sudorific effect of this mode of treatment is beyond conception. After the first seven days the patient leaves off taking the bolusses, but still continues to inhale the steam through a hollow cane from a pot on the fire in which some of this medicine is boiling. At the expiration of fourteen days, he is allowed a little meat, and his diet is increased by degrees, for forty days, after

powerful and *singular* properties; an account of which, however, would be better inserted in a medical work than in this Journal.—*Editor*.

which he is allowed the air, and gradually goes about until he has entirely recovered his strength; but many die under the remedy.

Meshero, which is a sort of scrophula, is also another disease very common in the country. The Abyssinians conceive this disorder to be connected with the above, and they apply the same kind of medicine, though I have known some who succeed in curing it in a different manner, of which I was once an eye-witness. The operator took a razor and made two deep cuts in the shape of a cross upon the swelling, then put in his little finger, and very soon brought to the surface a kernel about the size of a common nut: this he disengaged from the flesh with his razor, and then bound up the wound with some pounded herbs, which he had prepared for the purpose. Observing that he took great care of the kernel, I begged him to tell me what he wanted it for; when he told me, that after it had become perfectly dry, by being kept for several days in the sun, he should make a powder of it that would prevent any person from catching the same distemper. This powder, he said, was to be worn in a written charm about the neck of those who chose to pay him for the application. To satisfy my curiosity farther, he cut the kernel in two, to shew me what it contained, which I found to be

small slimy kernels: he remarked that those were the roots, which were just beginning to grow.

That dreadful complaint, the tape-worm, which is very frequent in Abyssinia, I cannot account for; formerly I had an opinion that it was through the inhabitants eating raw flesh, but that cannot be the case, because I have seen a guinea-fowl and several deer, that have been killed with these worms in their bowels: domestic animals, at times, are also afflicted with them. My opinion at present is, that it is produced by the climate and the water. If the Abyssinians were not blessed with the plant called *cusho*, which is a certain cure for this dreadful disease, as I have before mentioned, bad indeed would be the consequence. I myself was not troubled above four times with this disease, during my stay in the country; but my companion, Mr. Coffin, was under the disagreeable necessity of taking this medicine every six weeks or two months, like every other individual of the country.

Sore throats are common in the beginning of the rains, the cure for which is a wild honey, called *tasmar* by the Amhara; this honey is peculiar to the *kolla*, or low country; it is very thin, very clear, and of a reddish colour, with a particularly fine flavour: it is in general found in rocky ground, and the insect that produces it has a

long narrow body, of a yellowish colour, with wings about the size of a black ant. This liquor is squeezed from a spongy substance, which is quite different from the wax of bees. On my quitting the country I brought a few bottles in a *sanga's* horn, for a specimen, which I gave to Mr. Salt. This honey, the priests of the country affirm to be the wild honey that St. John the Baptist found in the wilderness, and they use it in several complaints as a medicine.

The Abyssinians have no established midwifery: when a woman is taken in labour, or gives signs of being near the hour of delivery, her female neighbours go to her assistance. Any female who happens to be present will take a razor and divide the umbilical cord, though the mother is frequently known to perform that operation herself, to be better satisfied of its not being left too long or too short. It is the custom of the country that no man should enter the door of a lying-in woman, till seven days after childbirth, though at times necessity obliges them to the contrary; on that day the neighbouring women assemble together, at the house, and take the bed-linen to the river to wash, marching together in a gang, and singing and calling on God to prosper the child. On this day they eat *gar* in the Tigré, or *gumfo* in the Amhara, and drink

sowa, as on the day of child-birth. The former is a mash made of wheat-flour, water, and butter; the latter the common beer of the country, a fermented liquor made indiscriminately from different kinds of grain, but in general of course from that most common in the part of the country where they reside. This feast is called *gella*. On the eighth day the child is circumcised; a woman performs the operation, and a white fowl is killed and cooked at the ceremony, and given to the woman, in recompense for her skill; no particular ceremony or assemblage of friends being held as among the Mahomedans. The females undergo a similar operation. A male child is christened at the age of forty days, but the female is not christened till the eightieth day.

Their manner of christening is somewhat singular. A man does not stand godfather for a girl, nor a woman for a boy, and the parents always look out for a person most able to make some present to their child. The parent or priest gives it the name, the godfather or godmother holding it in a piece of cloth, which they destine as a present to their god-son or god-daughter. Some, who can afford it, will present the child to the priest, to be baptized, in a very valuable piece of cloth. During the first part of the ceremony, the

godfather or godmother holds the child, and promises to do his or her best for it. During the whole ceremony, the priest swings to and fro a brass vase suspended by four brass chains, with small bells attached to it, in which frankincense is kept burning, and the fumes of which are sent forth during the whole of the ceremony. Before the priest places the child in the new cloth held by the godfather, he dips it in a large pan of water, and then takes a small wooden cross, and, beginning on the forehead, says, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." After repeating this, he crosses every joint of the body, behind and before; he then takes a feather, dipped in a certain oil, which is obtained from Egypt, and is called *meiron*, repeating this formula, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, I anoint thee with the holy oil, as a token that thou hast entered into Christ's flock." All this having been performed in the church-yard, near the entrance-gate, the mother takes the child into the church, and there waits till the sacrament is administered to the people, as well as to the child; some *ambasha*, cakes of bread, and beer, are the usual acknowledgments made to the priests by the parents on these occasions, except in the case of people of quality, who in general

invite all the priests of the church in which their child is christened, and give them a hearty feast.

I cannot help adverting to a practice which is not unfrequent, but which might appear fabulous to any one who had not witnessed it. When a woman has had one, two, or more children, and they have all died, she will, in hopes of saving the life of another just born, cut off a piece from the tip of the left ear, roll it up in a piece of bread, and swallow it; and others will keep one side only of the head shaved until the child is grown up. For some time I was at a loss to conjecture the reason why a number of grown people of my acquaintance had one ear cut; and, when told the truth, I could scarcely believe it, till I went into the house of a neighbour, though contrary to the custom, purposely to see the operation. An old woman cut off the tip of the ear, and put it into a bit of cold cooked victuals, called *sherro*, when the mother of the infant opened her mouth to receive it, and swallowed it, pronouncing the words, "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." They have recourse to many other superstitious and whimsical practices to prevent children from dying.

I shall give an account of their marriages, but as the Amhara and Tigré differ in some points, my narration may be considered as more particu-

larly applying to Tigré. No marriages are performed in churches, or by the interference of a priest. A man may have as many wives as he chooses, if he does not think it prudent to be attached to one, which is seldom the case. But when it does happen that a man and woman imagine they can be content with each other, and live together a religious life, they agree in the presence of a court of the elders of the town, or district, called *shummergildas*, to put whatever property they may have together, which property is counted and considered as belonging to them both, and the one cannot dispose of any part of it without the approbation of the other. They then swear, in the presence of the *shummergildas*, to be mutually faithful, and to take the holy sacrament together frequently on holydays; after which they go to the church, to make a confession, and the sacrament is administered to them for the first time. This is the only marriage that is a little Christian-like. During the time they are living in this holy state, they are called *carrava*, which is sacred people; but I have seldom known it to continue long without either the one or the other being suspected of adultery. The party accused of this act is taken before the *shummergildas*, by whom they were joined, or, in case of their absence, before a court of any

other *shummergildas* in the town, and, on the crime being proved by a certain number of witnesses, the *shummergildas* consult together and pass what sentence they think fit, according to the nature of the offence and the custom of the country, which makes a difference with regard to the number of times he or she may have been caught in the fact. If, after this, they still do not wish to be parted, which is often the case, the offender is sentenced to forfeit part of his or her share of the property joined together on their marriage, which is given to the offended party as *rasa*, which signifies a penalty, to be at his or her sole disposal. But, should the complainant insist upon being parted, whether it be the man or woman, the offender is sentenced to forfeit half of his or her original property. If they have children, they are divided according to the sentence of the *shummergildas*; when a boy and a girl, the father in general takes the boy and the mother the girl. At the separation of man and wife, I once saw, to end the dispute about a little girl, the father and mother cast lots which should have her: this is done in a very fair way; the *shummergildas* takes two sticks, one of them being longer than the other that they may be identified; then they are presented to the man and wife, and the *shummergildas* says to

the man, "This belongs to you," and to the woman, "This belongs to you," after which a stranger is called in, who never saw the sticks, but knowing what they are presented to him for, it being a common custom to cast lots on several occasions, he takes hold of them, and, putting them between his hands, places them behind his head, when, rolling them round rapidly, he throws one down, saying, "In the name of God, this is the owner," and each of the parents, knowing their own stick, thanks God and takes away the child.

In the above-mentioned marriages, I have known instances of many being cheated by impostors. There are a number of people in different parts of Abyssinia, who get their living by *moggot and sheffart*, which signify "lawyering and cheating," though *tuvverku* is the common name given to a lawyer, *moggot* being more applicable to those who plead causes, who are connected often with men who make such marriages a business. One of these, knowing a woman to have a good property, feigns to fall in love with her, and entices her into the snare. After he has succeeded in persuading the poor woman to be his wife, and they are bound by an oath to receive the sacrament together and live as the select people of Christ, he, in a very

short time, brings one of his acquaintances to be a constant visiter*, and a plan is arranged between them in what manner to act: for instance, a day will be appointed for the ruin of the poor woman, when the acquaintance will be lying and playing on the same sofa with the woman, such liberties being common in Abyssinia, when the parties are intimate friends and familiar in the family, and then the husband will come in suddenly, bringing several witnesses with him, whom he has told previously that he has frequently caught a man with his wife. On their approach, the friend jumps from the sofa and makes his escape, in order to confirm the fact, and in this way the poor woman is cheated. If she says any thing in her defence, when before the *shummergildas*, the witnesses against her, who suppose they are attesting the truth, are too numerous, and she is accordingly condemned. I have known several instances of this kind, and indeed I once knew a woman to have been guilty of this shameful practice in several towns where she had lived. She was a native of Gondar, who set herself up for a *tuvverku*, or lawyer, by which profession she procured her maintenance, as one of the

* An Abyssinian is never jealous of a man with whom he is on terms of friendship, whatever familiarity there may be between him and his wife.

higher class of people. She is known in all the principal towns of Abyssinia by the name of Wolletta Gorgis Sheffart, or cheat.

In all law-suits, either before the governor of a province or a court of *shummergildas*, the plaintiff and the defendant stand up, with their cloth tied round their middle, leaving the upper part of the body naked, which is customary even in the severest weather. The *tuvverkus* stand on each side of them, pleading in a loud tone of voice their several causes, during which time wagers of mules, cows, sheep, or *wakeahs* of gold, &c., are continually laid by the *tuvverkus*, that they will prove such and such charges which may be denied by the plaintiff or defendant; which wagers, when won, become the perquisites of the governor. They will also bind each other over to forfeit a mule, or a *wakeah* of gold, not to speak till the other has finished his speech; but it often happens that the falsehoods which the one may be relating incense the other, who in general holds his mouth with his hand, to such a degree, that, forgetting he is bound by a forfeit not to speak, he bursts out into a rage, exclaiming, *Assert!* [a lie!] when he is instantly taken up by the governor's servant, whose office it is to look for such slips, and obliged to give bond on the spot for the forfeit lost; or he has a chain

put on his wrist, and is chained to one of the governor's servants till he pays the sum forfeited; though it is seldom that they cannot find some one standing or sitting by to be bond for them. These forfeits are also the governor's perquisites. I have known a great man lose by one wager fifty white mules, which are the most esteemed, the wager having been made merely to show his consequence.

CHAPTER X.

Arts practised to procure Husbands—Dowry—Ceremonies of Marriage—The *Arkeys;* their Duties—Musical Instruments—Dancing—Depravity of the Clergy—Licentiousness of the nobility and higher classes—Punctual observance of Fasts—Administration of the Holy Sacrament—Marks of Respect paid to Churches—Priests—Confessors—Schools—Punishment of Scholars—Written Charms—Story of a Gojam Dofter—Tobacco prohibited by the Priests—Their Dress—Form of Churches—The *Tavvat*, or Ark—Mode of obtaining Redress from Princes or Chiefs—Payment of Taxes—Cattle—Servants—Houses—Agriculture—Ravages of Monkeys—Crops—Weeding—Cookery—Feeding.

I SHALL now give some account of the way in which the Abyssinians procure husbands for their daughters, and their mode of marrying. The Amhara, as well as the Tigré, when they fancy their daughter old enough to take a husband, which is in general, especially among the Amhara, incredibly young*, plait her hair very neat, and blacken her eyes with a mineral called *cohot*,

* I have known many middle-aged men take children from eight to twelve years of age to their wives, and they have borne children at fourteen*.

* I am informed by Mr. Coffin that he has known many girls become mothers at eleven or even ten years of age.—*Editor.*

which they obtain from the caravans from Egypt. They also die her hands with a root called *socella,* resembling our sweet potato, of a dark red colour. She is then placed constantly at the door in dry weather, either spinning or clearing corn, so that every one who passes may behold her; and she is taught by the mother to turn up the whites of her eyes, (which are in general very large) when young men or strangers pass, and put on a smiling look, between modesty and bravery, when answering their questions. If any man take a liking to a girl in this situation, let him be young or old, he either goes or sends to the mother, or any relation she may have, and asks for her, and, to satisfy himself respecting certain points, he himself sends a female acquaintance to inspect her. The mother then demands her dowry, which is a dress, consisting of a cotton shirt and a piece of cloth, which, if he chooses to be extravagant, will cost to the amount of four and a half or five dollars, for six months, she on her part engaging to do the labouring work in the house; but she is allowed a servant for fetching wood and water, and other out-door duties. If the man has reason to feel satisfied with the girl, he sends a piece of white cloth dipped in the blood of a fowl to her friends, but if not, he returns her and takes back the cloths

he gave. The first three days the girl is obliged to drink a gravy made from a fowl, very hotly seasoned with pepper and onions, from an erroneous notion that it may effect the purpose intended; but as I have no skill in such matters I shall say no more about it. The husband can turn her away when he chooses, and she may quit him at the expiration of the time first settled, if they cannot agree.

Those of a higher rank, such as chiefs of districts, farmers, or tradesmen, in general look out for some person's son of the same station as themselves, and the marriage is agreed on in the presence of the *shummergildas*, the father and mother of each giving a dowry. Only half the quantity of the girl's dowry is given to the son, though in Amhara both are equal. If it be a chief's son or daughter, the parents give a certain number of matchlocks, swords, cattle, cloths, hard money, and salt, the common currency of the country. The marriage is celebrated in great style. A large square *dass* is built with the branches and boughs of trees, and, on the day appointed, all the relations and friends of the parties assemble, except the father or nearest relation of the man, who, after sending the son's portion to the *shummergildas*, prepares to receive the married couple at his own house.

Several cows are in general killed, and in the *dass* a table or platform is spread out from one end to the other, covered with bread, maize, and *sowa*, called by the Amhara *tsug* and *taller*, so that all who attend may drink till they become intoxicated. When all is ready, the man, who is to take the woman away as his wife, comes riding on horseback, with several attendants, into the *dass*, dismounts, and with spear and shield in hand, shows himself off to the best advantage; boasting of his former deeds, and and of those he will still perform, &c. &c., according to the custom of the country. His *arkeys* follow his example, in turn telling of their exploits. They then sit down, and the goods, cattle, and other articles, given on either side in dowry, are counted by the *shummergildas*, put together, and consigned to the *arkeys*, who send them home to the husband's premises. The festival then begins, and the raw meat is handed about, while it still reeks and shivers under the large two-edged knife, with which every man is furnished. The girl, whom, perhaps, the husband has never seen in his life, is seated on a couch, surrounded by her female servants and her *arkeys*, who hold their cloths before her, to conceal her from his sight. Before the festival arrives at its height, and when the parties are beginning to be intoxi-

cated, the husband again jumps up, boasting as before, while his *arkeys* fly to the girl, take hold of her, drag her away, as if by force, and put her upon a mule, one of the *arkeys* jumping up behind her. The husband and his followers then mount their horses, and ride off together*.

The *arkeys*, in Tigré (called *musiers* in Amhara) are in general four or five in number. The woman has only two *arkeys*, intimate acquaintances who have been intreated to take the office. They are sworn to be true to each other through life, and to protect each other's wives and families, and they afterwards live together as the dearest friends. They also go about the country to which they belong, to collect gifts in a pitiful manner, (as I have often told them) for the newmarried pair; each striving to outdo the other in collecting the most, and, to complete their share, they often steal sheep, goats, and even cows, and take the fowls from the poor by force. This wild career lasts about three weeks.

After the husband has taken his wife a great distance from the place whence he fetched her, if he cannot possibly reach his own district that day, he will take up his lodgings, which his

* Their marriages in general take place about Christmas or after Ascension-day.

attendants soon find, in some village in the neighbourhood. Here, after some refreshment, the man and wife retire to bed for the first time, an *arkey* of each party lying by them, to give assistance in case of illness or accident. If the husband is satisfied with his bride, a fowl is immediately killed, and a white rag soaked in its blood, which, together with a fat goat and a hornful of white honey, is sent back to the father and mother by one of the man's *arkeys*, who in general receives a present for his good tidings. But, should he have reason to suspect her virtue, the husband takes a whip and makes her tell the name of her paramour, that he may take measures to prevent any communication between them in future. He may, if he chooses, send her back immediately to her parents, and demand restitution of his dowry, though, for the sake of peace between his and her parents, he in general keeps her. In this case, however, instead of a fat goat and a hornful of honey, he sends back an old lean goat, with one ear cut off, and a horn half full of bad honey. This very often happens, as the girls are not remarkable for their chastity; indeed I know it to be a fact that, in the province of Ammerseen, Temben, and in several parts of Enderta and Agow, parents actually take the precaution mentioned by Buffon

to preserve the integrity of their daughters until the time of their marriage.

At the above-mentioned marriages the trumpeters, drummers, and fifers, belonging to the governor of the province, are present, and receive a piece and a half of cloth from every married pair throughout the province, which perquisites are granted to the governor to maintain the band.

It may not be amiss to give in this place some account of their musical instruments. The trumpets are in general made of the skin of the elephant, except the lower broad mouth, which is the neck of a calebash. They give out a tremendous sound. The fifes are made of a hard wood hollowed out, having three holes for the fingers of the left hand. They are blown into at the end, are about a foot and three quarters long, and their tone is very wild, especially when they are accompanied by a small instrument called *tora*, about eight inches long, which is likewise blown at the end, yielding a hollow, bass, and savage sound. Three trumpeters, three fifers, and one tora, with a long drum, narrower at one end than at the other, and beat at both ends with the hands, complete the band of the chief of a district.

The band of a Ras consists of the number

above-mentioned, and forty-four large drums accompanied each by a small one. These drums are in the shape of the kettle-drums of Europe, cut out of trunks of large trees; they are headed with cow-hide, and, being very heavy, are carried on mules, the larger on the right side and the smaller on the left, the drummer riding behind, with a small straight stick in the left hand, and one that turns up at the end and larger in the right. His provisions, in leather bags, beneath the drums, prevent these heavy and clumsy instruments from galling the animal's back; these drums produce a warlike sound, and in marches are beat regularly together, though they have but few changes.

Of stringed instruments, they have a sort of fiddle, consisting of a piece of wood, square and hollowed out, with a neck about a foot and a half long. The hollow part is covered with hide, on which the bridge stands. It has only one string, and the stick is a bow bent, with several horse-hairs attached to it. They have also a kind of lyre, the lower part of which is made of a hollow piece of wood and covered with cow-hide, and above which is a slight wooden arch, about two feet high, to which six strings are fastened. Each string has a piece of wood, to answer to it as a screw, which twists the string round the top

of the arch. This instrument is called *charchamer*. There is another, of nearly the same form, and of the same materials, only larger and with ten strings called *berganner*. Some of them are four feet high, and their notes are very pleasant. The nobility and great men all practise playing upon them; the strings are beat with a piece of wood, or ivory, with the right hand, while the fingers of the left command the tune. There are besides many childish instruments chiefly made out of the horns of animals.

Their manner of dancing consists rather in the motion of the shoulders and head than in that of the legs or feet. When several dance at a time they move round in a ring. The men jump a great height at times, while the women squat down by degrees, making motions with the head, shoulders, and breast, until they nearly squat on the ground. They afterwards spring up in a lively manner, and go round as before. The Amhara do not practise this latter exercise, but their motions are the same. Their songs are far from humorous, and seldom consist of more than one or two short verses, sung over and over again, in a rude manner. The chanting of the priests in their churches and public places would be more agreeable, if they did not exhibit the most unbecoming actions while they are so employed.

The Abyssinians, while they profess to be rigid followers of the Christian faith, are yet ignorant of the greater part of its precepts; which arises chiefly from the want of a good example being shown to them by those of the superior class. Even the heads of their clergy, instead of holding out to the populace an example of good Christian morals, practise the very reverse. They are in general the greatest drinkers in the whole country, and at feasts, the quantity of raw meat which they consume, and the ravenous manner in which they devour it, exceeds all belief; indeed they behave more like drunken beasts, when in company, than civilized beings. They are besides addicted to fighting, quarrelling, lying, swearing, cheating, and adultery. By chance you find, here and there, a priest who is free from these vices; and who strives to set a good example; but the clergy are too loosely governed, all considering themselves as equals, to be corrected by the good example of one or two individuals. I knew one especially, with whom I was acquainted for several years, at the head of the Trinity church at Chelicut, who always conducted himself like a virtuous father of the faith, striving earnestly to bring the people over to the practice of good morals. He even made a speech in the church, against the abomination and disgrace to

the Christian faith of eating raw meat, but before he could finish he was interrupted by the clergy under him, who threatened to displace him and put another in his office; to this he did not object, readily consenting to have no more interference with the duty of their church, since they would not be taught by him. But the Ras, hearing of the affair, prevailed upon him to retain his station, and to permit the people to do as their fathers had done before them. This chief priest's name was Allicar Barhe, mentioned in Mr. Salt's Journal; he was born in Gondar, and obtained a superior education at the church Ledett, in which he had held the situation of deacon. In such a state of things, how can it be expected that other classes of people should have good morals, when those who ought to teach them have none?

The nobility, and all those of a certain rank, live in a state of great licentiousness and debauchery, even when married. They are seldom jealous of each other, or at least never show their jealousy, knowing well each other's culpability; but when a man actually witnesses the infidelity of his wife, he immediately kills the intruder. Nothing, however, happens to the woman more than that she is left to lament the loss of her lover, and to bear the shame of being accounted

guilty of his death. This seldom happens, as the great people of Abyssinia always live in separate apartments, where both sexes have many convenient opportunities; the women having the privilege of keeping what servants and company they please, the same as the men.

Notwithstanding the libertine conduct of the Abyssinians, they strictly keep all their fasts, which are very numerous, and on those days never eat or drink, till about three o'clock in the afternoon, which time they compute by measuring so many lengths of the foot given by the shade of the body on level ground. This, indeed, is the only way in which they keep time in Abyssinia. Their great Lent, which commences in February, lasts fifty-six days. The fast for the apostles, which is in one year fifteen days, and in the other thirty, begins in June. The fast for the Blessed Virgin, which is in August, lasts fifteen days. The fast of Quosquom, kept by priests only, beginning in October, and the fast before Christmas-day, called Ledetts, both continue thirty days. The fast of Tumkut, or of baptism, lasts one day, and the fast of Unus lasts three days, making altogether a total of one hundred and sixty five days in one year, and one hundred and fifty in another, exclusive of the Wednesdays and Fridays

throughout the year, except during the eight weeks after the great Lent, in which these fasts are not observed, being eight weeks of continued festival. Some eat fish on these fast days, and others eat nothing but pulse or herbs, especially during the great Lent.

Their years are called after the four Evangelists; that of John is the leap-year. St. John's day is new-year's day. Christmas is on the twenty-ninth of Tisa, and answers to about the 6th of our January. They reckon the number of years from the creation of the world to the birth of Christ five thousand five hundred; and from the birth of Christ to the present time one thousand eight hundred and five, the latter being about nine years short of our time. The *lick-counts*, or scribes, who regulate the time, esteem themselves very learned people, and are proud beyond conception. The priests are also proud of their learning, and of their rules and regulations in the performance of divine service as Christians, though numbers of them cannot read.

The administering of the holy sacrament is quite a public ceremony. The sacrament is prepared in a part within the church walls, or hedge, called Bethlem, which is in general on the east

side, where no female is allowed to go*. It consists of ground raisins and wheat flour, mixed with water, and is brought from the apartment where it is prepared in a basket, covered with a bit of red cloth or silk, carried on the head of a deacon, a bell being carried before it, continually ringing to give notice of its approach, when every body stands up and repeats the Lord's prayer. It is then placed in the middle of the dark part, where the altar stands, and candles are burned to give light, when a priest takes the mixture, which is in a large bowl, and, with a large wooden spoon, puts it into the mouths of those that come up to receive it, each repeating a short prayer while another priest gives them the cross to kiss. After receiving the holy sacrament, they place their hands to their mouths and go their way, nor will they on any consideration spit that day, even if a fly by chance be drawn into the mouth by their breath, which at other times would occasion them to vomit, as they detest a fly, and many will not even eat or drink what a fly has been found in.

In the churches of a superior class the articles for preparing the sacrament are, like their other ornaments, of gold and silver, the churches in general

* No woman is permitted to enter or be buried on the same side of the church where the sacrament is administered.

being very richly endowed, though I have before said the building itself is worth little. On passing a church mounted, they alight from their horse or mule, and kiss the gateway or tree in front, according to the distance they are at when passing, and, if at a distance, they take up a stone and throw it upon a heap, which is always found on the road opposite to the church. In Abyssinia, a traveller, who sees in the wildest deserts large piles of stones, might be led to attribute the custom to the same motive which occasions similar piles to be found in Arabia, where some one has been killed and buried, and all who know him, as they pass, throw a stone on his grave; but this is not the case here, those stones being thrown there by Christians, who know that the nearest church lies opposite to the spot: and on this account an Abyssinian traveller, when he sees such a pile of stones, knows that he is opposite to a church, and in consequence kisses the pile and adds another stone to the heap.

The priests are numerous beyond belief. The total revenue of the church is divided into equal portions, of which the Allicar, or chief priest, has ten for his share; others, according to their rank, one or more. Numerous parties of priests also resort to the different churches, who have no part in its income. Some live by begging,

and some get a maintenance from the priests of the church who are too idle to do the duty when it comes to their turn, and so employ them. There is a treasurer in every church called *carpet*, who looks after the wealth belonging to it; he is reckoned among those of the superior rank, and his income in general consists of three portions. When a priest has conduct enough to behave in a sober and righteous way, and never to be seen in company, when he first comes to live in a strange town, he is taken notice of by every one of the towns-people, and they fly to him, as their father, confessing their sins, and giving him presents for forgiveness; and, if he remain a number of years, he is sure to amass considerable property. He may have two or three thousand such children, and each gives him every year, on St. John's or new-year's day, a piece or two of salt, or about the fifteenth part of a dollar. Those who have prudence enough to conduct themselves in this manner for five or six years will make money enough to maintain them during the remainder of their lives, and will then return to their native place, and purchase oxen, take a wife, commence farming, and live well, so long as the country they reside in is at peace.

A priest can marry only once; the greater part of the priests, however, think it not lawful

to marry, and many thousands who resort to Waldubba, Beshlo, Temben, and other sacred places, never marry, though they are too often detected in the commission of adultery. No one can take upon himself, where he is known, to be a father confessor, unless he has been confirmed by the Egyptian patriarch. There are priests and deacons, who go about to the different towns, or residences of chiefs, where they find employment in teaching children to read, but this is very rare, and they have few scholars, which always surprised me, as the schooling is very cheap. The master receives, for teaching a boy or girl, one piece of cloth, equal to a dollar, every year, and two cakes of bread daily, from every scholar in turn, so that if he has many it does not bear hard on any individual. Their school is held generally in a churchyard, or in some open place near it, sometimes before the residence of the master, and, in that case, during the rains, they are all crowded up in a small dark hut, learning prayers by word of mouth from the master, instead of from a book. When a boy is somewhat advanced in learning, he is made to teach the younger ones.

However few the scholars, the master has in general great trouble with them, and, in addition to the ordinary punishments, numbers are con-

stantly obliged to be kept in irons. The common way of punishing scholars is as follows. The schoolmaster stands over them with a wax-taper, which cuts as severely as a whip, while five or six boys pinch the offender's legs and thighs, and if they spare him the master gives them a stroke with the taper; but the correction considered most effective for these young Abyssinian rogues is that of having irons put upon their legs for many months together, which in one instance I knew proved fatal. It was a grown Agow boy, about thirteen years of age, who had more than once contrived to get his irons off and desert from the school, for which the master, by desire of the parents, put so heavy a pair of irons upon his ancles, that he found it impossible to get them off, and this enraged him so much, that he drew his large knife, cut his own throat, and soon afterwards expired.

Very few Abyssinians learn to write; those who do are chiefly occupied in writing charms, and some of the more artful persuade the poor ignorant people that they are possessed of supernatural powers, especially the cunning Dofters of Gojam, many of whom travel about the country, writing charms, &c. In country villages, the inhabitants will maintain one of these persons for months together, he pretending

that he can prevent hail from destroying their corn, and the locust from approaching the district, and cure all sorts of diseases with his written charms, for which he not only gets paid, but lives upon the fat of their district, and administers justice according to his own good-will and pleasure.

I cannot help mentioning a circumstance which once befel one of these impostors. The Ras had often conversed with me, telling me the power these people had, and what dangerous enemies they were to those who offended them; to which I always replied, that it was only a foolish superstition of the ignorant, and that they had no power more than other people, and ought rather to be punished as impostors. Through frequent conversations he began, I saw, to be of my opinion, but dared not show it, for fear of giving umbrage to the priests. A Gojam Dofter came one day to ask the Ras to put him at the head of the clergy of some country district, assuring him that he could prevent the ravages of the small-pox, of the destructive locust, or of hail. The Ras, smiling, recommended him to me and Mr. Coffin, who were then sitting at dinner with him. In consequence, he made his bow, and addressed himself to us. On our return home, he followed us, and we ordered our gatekeeper to permit him to

enter the yard, while I and Mr. Coffin went into the house, and soon returned with two English cart-whips, that came with the artillery harness and carriages brought by Mr. Salt. The Dofter smiled at seeing those long weapons, and asked the use of them. "We are going to show you," said Mr. Coffin, and I immediately added, in a serious tone, "If you can save others from the wrath of God, save yourself from the whipping you are going to receive;" on which we both began to lay on, till he fell at our feet, imploring mercy, declaring he had no more power than his fellow-creatures. After this acknowledgment, we gave him his bellyful of victuals, raw meat, and maize, and turned him out of the yard, when he asked us for money, which we refused, and he became very troublesome and abusive. At last he so provoked Mr. Coffin, that he took his blunderbuss, charged it, put the blood of a fowl which he had just killed on the top of the powder, and went to the gate and discharged it at him; when the man, seeing himself covered with blood, took to his heels and ran up to the top of a small mountain, where he remained till the evening, when he descended and went to the Ras's gate, calling out *Abbate! Abbate!* [justice]; and stating that the white man had shot him. Upon this, the Ras sent for me and Mr. Coffin, to

inquire into the matter, when, hearing the truth of the affair, he laughed heartily, and dismissed the fellow, who departed, and was never heard of more in that part of the country. For several weeks after, the old Ras would laugh heartily at dinner time over the story.

Another time we produced the same effect upon one of these impostors, with a number of squibs and crackers, that came from England also, which we threw upon him through the roof, into a close room, where he was writing his charms, and drawing the picture of hell, the devil, &c., which frightened him so much that he broke open the door, and, leaving his cap and turban, with all the utensils of his art, behind him, he ran off, and never returned. This also furnished great amusement to the old gentleman, though he never durst say any thing against these wretches in public, even when he was himself convinced.

There was also a great Dofter who used to travel about the country of Enderta for several years, and had become very rich by cheating the poor and ignorant. This Dofter used to attend the sick, and was employed to purify places supposed to be haunted by the devil, &c. He used always to commence his operations in the heat of the sun, when he would order all fires to be removed

from near the spot, and would then sit down on a dry place near the door, and tell the people to withdraw to a little distance while he prayed, during which time he would, by the assistance of the bottom of a broken bottle, set fire to some dry horse-dung, with the rays of the sun; he would then throw on some frankincense, to make a great smoke, and, rising up with his face towards heaven, would call his ignorant employers, telling them in an awful tone, that "God had heard him, and sent down fire from heaven to destroy all their enemies, visible or invisible." This I found out by my own investigation, having produced the same effect with the bottom of a broken *bruly*, or bottle, which experiment I showed to the Ras. Still, none durst disbelieve the Dofter.

The priests and clergy abhor the smoking of tobacco, and no one is allowed to enter a church who has previously been smoking, though numbers of them take snuff. Indeed, the smoking of tobacco is forbidden by the priests to all classes, yet many are addicted to the habit, for which they are answerable to their father-confessor, it being accounted a sin. This prohibition took place many years ago, and derived its origin from the adventures of a priest, called Abba Zerraverrock. Being accustomed to smoke tobacco, and his

stock being exhausted when on his pilgrimage to Deverer Libanus, on the road to Shoa, he was under the necessity of selling a silver cross, which he wore about his neck, to a pagan Galla for a supply. On his return from his pilgrimage, he laid before the Echigge, or high-priest, and the court of Gondar, the wickedness he had been tempted to commit, through the practice of smoking tobacco, when instantly an order was issued forbidding all Christians the use of that herb, which grows very plentifully in the *kolla*, or warm parts of the country, and is very cheap.

On entering a church, people always bow and kiss the corners of the door-way. The priests carry a small cross in their hands, which they frequently present to the people to kiss; indeed the lower class kiss any picture shown to them, or any thing that resembles the human figure. Priests of the superior class have a long two-edged sword always carried before them, by way of state, and some of them even two, three, four, and more. Their dress is a long open shirt, with large wide sleeves and a collar, the ends of which hang down on each side of the breast to the waist, tapering to a point; long loose trowsers, a skull-cap, and a light turban. Some of them dress in yellow, but this colour is mostly confined to

monks, or those who resort to the wilderness; white being the colour in common use. The priests are in general very polite, and, as far as outward appearance goes, very good people, but they are for the greater part the most despicable wretches in Abyssinia, though some are to be found, as I have before said, with exceedingly good qualities.

Having already given some account of their churches, and of the manner in which they are ornamented, I shall now only remark, with respect to their general form, that the inner part is a square room within which stands an altar about the height of a man. It is constructed of wood, of very inferior workmanship, though in the superior churches painted very elegantly. Within this altar, which is called *munvar*, is a small ark called *tavvat*, far inferior to the workmanship of a common European tinker's tool-box, and about that size. This is the sacred article that bears the name of the saint to whom the church is dedicated, no one being allowed to touch it but the priests. On the holydays of the different saints, the neighbouring churches send about their *tavvats*, to do honour to the respective church of each saint, and when in this way exposed to public view they are borne on the head of a priest, being covered with silk or any other

coloured stuff. Before them march the inferior clergy belonging to the church, dressed in all sorts of rich clothes, with crowns of gold, silver, or brass, on their heads, each ringing a bell and bearing a long stick with a cross at the end, in one hand, and a kind of crucifix in the other, singing a joyful song. The trumpeters also march in front, while the high-priest rides behind with the priests of superior class, the populace following in procession. The girls form themselves into different parties, with their neighbours, and sing, dance, and clap their hands, to the accompaniment of a long drum, beat at both ends by a girl, who carries it with a strap about her neck. If in large towns, or near any populous place, the chiefs, with their soldiers, mounted upon horses and dressed in their warlike apparel, assemble to do honour to the *tavvat*, and they ride about in all directions, with fury and tumult, while the altar is moving slowly along; many accidents happen at these times. During the holyday, the *tavvats* of the respective churches are placed in small tents, or huts, built purposely, where each party of priests administers the sacrament to those who wish to partake of it, many choosing to receive it from the hands of a priest of the church dedicated to one saint, and many from others; their superstition leading them to believe

that one saint may be more partial to them than another through life. In the same way the nobility, and people of the middling class, give a feast every year in the name of some particular saint, whom they have made choice of from their youth, keeping open houses during that day, and giving alms to the poor. Yet, I am sorry to add, they wring it from the poor again tenfold, before the year is expired, by arbitrary oppression.

Corn, cattle, honey, butter, and cloths, are given, as tax or rent, to the chiefs of districts, of which a certain portion is paid by each to the prince or ruler of the province, yearly at Mascal. When the inhabitants of a district of any single individual find themselves oppressed by their governor, they repair to the premises of the prince or Ras, generally by night, where they cry out in a lamentable tone, *Abbate! Abbate!* till he hears them and sends one of his household to inquire into their complaint. If it be thought reasonable, they are admitted into the prince's presence; and, if he finds that they have been oppressed, he sends to the offender to return what has been unjustly taken; if not, to appear himself immediately at court: but, in spite of this apparent facility of redress, the poor in general, sooner or later, content themselves under their oppression

rather than complain, otherwise their chief will often bring them into a lawsuit, where they must attend daily, for a whole month perhaps, without getting a hearing, during which time they are not only detained from their daily labour, but have to pay dearly to the prince's household for admittance, whether they obtain a hearing or not; and, in general, when it comes to that point, the chief has the means of procuring false witnesses enough to condemn and ruin them. In fact the peasants or labouring people, in all parts of Abyssinia, never know when their persons or property are safe, on which account they are obliged to repair to the habitations of their chief on holydays, some presenting bread, butter, honey, and corn, and others a goat, sheep, or fowls, to keep in favour, and to prevent him from sending his soldiers to live upon their premises.

The south-east districts pay their taxes to government in salt, in the place of cloths, being near the *arro*, or salt-pans, where little cloth is manufactured. Enderta, Serra, Womberta, Deora, Desa, and Monus, all pay salt and cattle, and no cloths; Wojjerat pays honey and cattle, while all other districts throughout the kingdom pay the greater part of their tribute in cloths or gold. A carpet, a piece of silk, a matchlock, or any other

article, brought into their country by the caravans, is valued and received as cloth or gold. Cloth is very cheap, cotton being extremely plentiful in the centre and northernmost parts of Abyssinia. They manufacture no other kind of cloth but cotton, though they make coarse rags from the fleeces of their sheep, which are, for the greater part, black.

Though it is such a fine country for pasture, the sheep are seldom fat. The larger kind of cattle, as well as goats, thrive well, and would be the best and finest I have ever seen were they taken better care of. Their keepers are cruel, and, as they are obliged to be penned up and are very seldom cleaned, fatal diseases often occur among them, especially during the rains. The horses and mules are in general kept in the house together with their master, which makes it better for them. The horses are mostly spirited and handsome, and will bear much fatigue. They never clean them; indeed, when I have talked to them about the manner of cleaning and shoeing horses in my own country, it has caused great laughter, and few could believe that it was true; however I used to convince them how much better my own horses appeared, from their being cleaned every day, though I was not able to shoe them. The whole country abounding in corn and grass,

horses are fed well and at a cheap rate. A grass-cutter's pay is only three pieces of salt, equal to three dollars, per year, besides his provisions, and he brings a large load every day from the mountains or valleys. If it be a very dry season, so that long grass becomes scarce, he always provides for the horses plenty of *taff* straw, which is equal to straw or hay. The pay of all other common servants of both sexes is the same; and I have observed, that if through their faithfulness and attention the master may think fit to make them an addition to their pay, or any present, they become immediately ungovernable and insolent, the least indulgence spoiling them for good servants. When not indulged they are very submissive, and never receive any thing from their master's hand without bowing and kissing the article. The day they receive their new cloth, or wages, after sewing it into a proper form for a dress, they go to their master and mistress, and bow with their foreheads to their knees, saying, "Bless my new dress, that it may be a lucky one!" Servants of both sexes, after washing either the master's or mistress's feet, always bow and kiss them; they are in general clean in their persons, and wash themselves often as well as their dress. Still they are seldom free from the itch, to which disease all persons in the country

are liable. The women keep the clearest from it, by soaking their hands and feet in an infusion of a root called *socella,* which dyes them a dark red colour by way of ornament.

Their houses are far from being clean, in general swarming with vermin. They consist only of stones and clay, thatched over with a kind of grass, which I have mentioned in a former part of my Journal. The land is cultivated with great ease; they use no kind of manure to enrich the soil. They plough with a small plough, which the farmer holds in one hand and a large whip in the other, and it is drawn by a yoke of oxen, which are trained to be very steady. A cow is never put into the yoke, for which reason an ox is never killed, unless he will not or is not able to draw the plough. Cows are always used for slaughter. In clearing for cultivation land which never before was tilled, they cut down the trees and bushes, which they pile in different places over the remaining stumps of the larger sort, and, when dry, set them on fire, and then plough the ground two or three times over, and it is fit for cultivation.

At the commencement of the rains, the fields farthest from their villages are frequently damaged by hogs and monkeys, which are very numerous every where near the mountains, the

centre of the larger plains being alone exempt from these intruders. I have myself seen an assemblage of large monkeys* drive the keepers from the field, in spite of their slings and stones, till several people went from the village to their assistance, and then they only retired slowly, on seeing that the men had no guns. Where leopards resort the country is clear of monkeys, but the farmer is continually losing his sheep and goats, though his corn may be safe. Wheat, barley, beans, hemp, and a corn called *arras* in Tigré, as well as peas, are sown in the month of June, after the first day or two of rain. Other different varieties of grain, called *marshella daguxu*, and a red *taff*, called *taff agi*, are sown from the latter end of April till the middle of May. There are in general ten or fifteen days' rain in these months. Their harvest for the above-mentioned grain lasts from the latter end of September till the begin-

* These monkeys, I am told by Mr. Coffin, are very mischievous and dangerous, especially to young females, when they chance to meet with them unprotected in solitary places: in case of blows or resistance they become extremely savage. I am not certain whether medical men are aware that these animals can be inoculated with the small-pox; but, as I have somewhere heard, or read, that this disease cannot be communicated, in any way, from the human subject to the brute creation, I merely mention the circumstance, as a fact that has come within Mr. Coffin's personal knowledge, and that the complaint is as fatal to the monkey as it is to the human species.—*Editor*.

ning of November; white and black *taff*, which is sown in the latter end of July and the beginning of August, is harvested in November and December; other species of grain called *shemberra* and *bursine*, are sown in the odd days, or *epagoma*, between August and September, and their harvest is in December and January. On plains or in valleys, near the rivers, they have crops all the year round, by means of trenches cut from the rivers, which water their banks for a considerable width, according to the industry of the farmers.

The rainy season, which is June, July, and August, is the quarter called Currumpta; the following three months are the quarter called Koi in Tigré; and the next quarter is called Asmerra.

The country is much overrun with numerous kinds of weeds, which, if neglected and not plucked up before the corn begins to form its ear, are often destructive to whole fields. The Abyssinians always help each other to weed their corn, which is done with great cermony; a chief will muster every soldier in his service and march at the head of them to his corn-fields, where they lay down their arms, form into a line, join in chorus to a song, and, in general led by a female, march on plucking up the weeds. In this way

they soon get through a number of fields, throwing the weeds down as they pluck them, and leaving the farming-men, boys, and girls, to carry them to the borders of the field. In the month of September the chief, in general, finds this employment for his soldiers to preserve his favourite white *taff*. At times he will, on his return home, give them a feast of raw meat and maize, which is considered as the greatest treat in Abyssinia. Nothing can give more pleasure to the soldiers, or be more welcome to a visiter or stranger, than entertaining them with the blood-warm raw steaks of a cow and a hornful of maize or *tsug*.

In their cooking, they are very clean, except in two or three dishes which I shall not omit to mention. Fowls are washed, after being cut into pieces for cooking, in a dozen waters at least, and the same is practised in cleaning fish. Both dishes are cooked with curry, a mixture of hot chilly-pepper, onions, and salt, called *dillack*, with the addition of some butter and spices, which altogether form a hot compound that few European throats could swallow.

Mutton and goats' flesh are somtimes curried, and sometimes boiled, but more frequently only a little broiled. Partridges, guinea-fowl, and other game, are always curried. A very favourite

dish is the sheep's or goat's paunch minced, the liver broiled and also minced, together with a little of the substance from the entrails, that has not been digested, and a few drops from the gall, mixed all together with another compound of red pepper and salt, called *horzy**. Another sauce consists of the thin substance from a cow's entrails, boiled with mustard and the mixture called *horzy* and butter, which they generally eat with the raw beef. Another dish, which is seldom to be met with, except at the tables of persons of the higher rank, or the nobility, is made from a part of the cow called *chickkiner*, which is very tender, and cut up raw into very small mince-meat, then mixed with black pepper and a great quantity of oil, that runs from the joints of the knees and other limbs of the cow while being dissected. He may consider himself a great favourite who gets his mouth crammed full of this dish.

Women do all the cookery, and every chief keeps a good cook, called *abbuzer*. *Sherro* is a dish often given to a stranger, it being quickly done; it is made of meal, butter, and pepper. As I have before mentioned, it is the custom to feed their

* The famous feast, to which Mr. Pallet was invited "after the manner of the ancients," appears a trifle by the side of these gastronomical delicacies.—*Editor*.

guests by cramming them, and when a man invites a friend to eat with himself and his wife, it is reckoned very unpolite if the wife does not feed the guest with her own hands; the husband will also at times cram the guest, male or female, without distinction, and the more voraciously the visiter eats the better bred he is esteemed, except when necessity causes a scanty table, as in a camp or on a march; then the more gluttonously a person eats the less he is regarded. [illegible] never see a stranger standing by, if even on a march, when going to eat, without asking him to partake of their fare.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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